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THE BEACON LIGHTS OF PROPHECY

AN INTERPRETATION OF

AMOS, HOSEA, ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL, AND DEUTERO-ISAIAH

BY

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PREFACE

THESE lectures are intended primarily for the preacher and layman, not the professional biblical scholar. Questions of literary criticism are consequently either passed over altogether or dealt with very briefly. The main conclusions of modern biblical scholarship are assumed and occasionally stated, but not discussed. What is aimed at is a vital interpretation of the prophetic movement and especially its six greatest literary representatives.

The standpoint here represented differs in one regard from the current view. It is here held that eschatology preceded literary prophecy instead of the reverse. There is, therefore, no valid ground for eliminating the Messianic passages from the writings of the preexilic prophets. These men were not merely preachers of repentance. They were heralds of the coming kingdom of God. They believed profoundly in a marvelous and not distant manifestation of Jehovah in doom and redemption. This manifestation was to be final and to mark a new era in the history of mankind. Only as this fact is recognized, can the intense passion of the prophets

be fully understood. It was not simply historical forces and temporal conditions with which they dealt. The religious leverage of their message is to be found in their eschatological outlook.

I am deeply indebted to the Rev. Lucius H. Bugbee, D.D., for reading the manuscript and making a number of valuable suggestions.

ALBERT C. KNUDSON.

CONTENTS

Chapter I

PAGE

The History and Nature of Prophecy 1

Importance of Hebrew prophecy, p. 1—The rank and file of the prophetic order, p. 2—The prophetic bands in the time of Samuel, p. 2—The prophetic guilds in the time of Elijah, p. 6—Deterioration of the prophetic order, and rise of the false prophets, p. 7—Preliterary prophets, p. 10—Relation of Moses to prophecy, p. 11—Samuel, p. 12—Nathan, Gad, and Ahijah, p. 15—Elijah, p. 16—Elisha, p. 19—Literary prophets, p. 19—Cause of the rise of literary prophecy, p. 20—Relation of the literary prophets to their predecessors and the political developments of their own time, p. 21—Classification of the literary prophets, p. 26—Nature of prophecy, p. 28—The Hebrew terms for prophet and their relation to the idea of prediction, p. 28—Prophecy as compared with divination, p. 31—Fundamental difference between the prophet and diviner, p. 36—Clairvoyant quality of the prophetic mind and possible reasons therefor, p. 39—Comparison of Hebrew prophets with Greek philosophers, p. 45—Function of prophet and priest contrasted, p. 49—Differences between prophet and apocalyptist, p. 50—The eschatological element in the teaching of the literary prophets and its importance, p. 52—The prophets not merely preachers of repentance but heralds of a new kingdom, p. 55.

Chapter II

Amos the Prophet of Moral Law 56

His present distinction due to the work of modern critics, p. 56—His home and its influence upon his mental

PAGE

development, p. 60—Relation of his message of doom to Judah, p. 61—His occupation and its bearing on his intellectual life, p. 63—His prophetic call, p. 65—Significance of his message of doom, p. 67—Analysis of the book, p. 71—The impending ruin as described by Amos, p. 72—The popular trust in ceremonialism and Israel's election, p. 77—Moral evils of the day, p. 81—Righteousness the one requirement of Jehovah, p. 82—Amos 9. 8–15 not the work of a later hand, p. 84.

CHAPTER III

HOSEA THE PROPHET OF LOVE 89

The importance of Hosea, like that of Amos, a modern discovery, p. 89—Political conditions during his time, p. 92—His home, p. 94—His relation to the priesthood, p. 96—The story of his marriage and its interpretation, p. 97—Relation of his marriage to his prophetic call, p. 102—Teaching and structure of chs. 1–3, p. 104—Analysis of chs. 4–14, p. 106—The prophet's message of doom and its significance, p. 107—The moral evils of his day, p. 110—The corrupt worship, p. 111—Hosea's denunciation of foreign alliances, p. 115—His antipathy to the monarchy, p. 116—Israel's cardinal sin, p. 117—Jehovah's love for Israel, p. 119—The prophet's message of hope, p. 121.

CHAPTER IV

ISAIAH THE PROPHET OF FAITH 125

Reasons for Isaiah's preeminence among the prophets, p. 125—His home and family, p. 127—His prophetic call, p. 128—The historical background of his ministry, p. 131—Interview with Ahaz, p. 135—Scenes illustrating the prophet's opposition to rebellion against Assyria, p. 136—Isaiah's attitude toward Assyria, p. 141—Analysis of the book, p. 143—Moral and religious condition of Judah, p. 146—Points of resemblance between Isaiah and the two preceding prophets, p. 147—Isaiah a religious

PAGE

teacher, not a practical statesman, p. 150—Inviolability of Jerusalem, p. 155—Doctrine of the remnant, p. 156—The Messianic prophecies, p. 157—Interpretation of Isa. 7. 14–17, p. 160.

CHAPTER V

JEREMIAH THE PROPHET OF PERSONAL PIETY 165

Teaching and influence of Jeremiah as compared with that of the preceding prophets, p. 165—His prophetic call, p. 169—Political background of his ministry, p. 172—The Scythian invasion, p. 174—Jeremiah's relation to the Deuteronomic reform, p. 176—His experiences during the reign of Jehoiakim, p. 179—Reign of Zedekiah and fall of Jerusalem, p. 182—Origin and analysis of the book of Jeremiah, p. 184—Jeremiah's message of doom, p. 185—Moral and religious conditions during his time, p. 188—His conception of human nature and of the need of a radical change of character, p. 189—Message of hope, p. 191—The Messiah and new covenant, p. 193—Jeremiah's self-revelations, p. 195—His suffering, p. 196—His attitude toward God, p. 198.

CHAPTER VI

EZEKIEL THE PROPHET OF INDIVIDUALISM 202

The priestly element in Ezekiel's work and its significance, p. 202—Relation of his teaching to that of Jeremiah, p. 205—His life, p. 207—Prophetic call, p. 207—Absolute sovereignty of Jehovah, p. 210—Ezekiel's sternness, p. 211—His commission, p. 213—His visions, p. 215—Was he a cataleptic? p. 216—His symbolical actions, p. 219—Evidence that he had an active ministry and was not merely a writer, p. 221—Analysis of the book, p. 224—Ezekiel's message of doom as compared with that of the preceding prophets, p. 225—The sins of Israel, p. 226—Message of hope, p. 228—Significance of chs. 38–39, p. 229—Interpretation of chs. 40–48, p. 230—Israel's future according to chs. 34–37,

PAGE

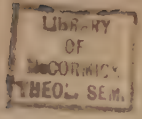
p. 231—Anticipations of Pauline teaching, p. 234—Doctrine of individualism, p. 235.

CHAPTER VII

DEUTERO-ISAIAH THE PROPHET OF UNIVERSALISM..... 240

Reasons for detaching Isa. 40–66 from the rest of the book, p. 240—Relation of Deutero-Isaiah to Isaiah, p. 241—Authorship of chs. 56–66, p. 243—Deutero-Isaiah's home and ministry, p. 244—Conflicting views concerning his date and the theme of his book, p. 246—Objections to a post-exilic date, p. 250—Eschatological element in Deutero-Isaiah, p. 253—His message almost exclusively one of hope, p. 255—Restoration of the exiles and inauguration of a new era in the history of the world, p. 259—Jehovah as sole deity, the eternal and transcendent Creator of heaven and earth, p. 262—Jehovah as a God of grace, p. 265—Cyrus, p. 266—Israel outside of the servant-passages, p. 267—The Suffering Servant, p. 269—Deutero-Isaiah's universalism, p. 274.

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES..... 278



CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY AND NATURE OF PROPHECY

Prophecy is the supreme gift of Israel to the world. There is nothing comparable to it in the religious history of mankind. Other peoples have had their great religious teachers: the Hindus their Buddha, the Persians their Zoroaster, the Arabians their Mohammed. But nowhere do we find a succession of men extending over several centuries of time, who entertained such lofty conceptions of religion, devoted themselves with such passion and power to the realization of these conceptions, and contributed so much to the permanent moralization and spiritualization of religion, as did the prophets of Israel. These men occupy a unique place in religious history. To them more than to any other group of men the world is indebted for its richest and noblest spiritual treasure.

In the following chapters we are to study six of the greatest of these prophets. But preliminary to these special studies, it is necessary that we give some account both of the history and nature of prophecy in general. We begin with the history.

History of Prophecy

Prophecy in the Old Testament is by no means a simple phenomenon. It contains different and even discordant elements. First, we may distinguish the rank and file of the prophetic order. These prophets come into special prominence at two important crises of the nation's history—during the Philistine wars of the eleventh century and the Syrian wars of the ninth century. But they are frequently referred to by the canonical prophets, and appear as late as the time of Nehemiah (6. 10-14). It is probable, then, that they formed a continuous institution in Israel, at least from the eleventh century before Christ down into the postexilic period.

Groups or bands of prophets first appear in the time of Samuel (1 Sam. 10. 5-13). They then apparently moved about the country devoting themselves to a rather extravagant type of religious life. They carried musical instruments with them, and by means of music and song seem to have worked themselves up into a state of frenzy. Indeed, so conspicuous a feature of their life was this physical excitement that they were called madmen (2 Kings 9. 11; Hos. 9. 7), and the verb "prophesy" came to be used in the sense of "rave" (1 Sam. 18. 10). They were thus ecstatics, resembling to a certain extent modern dervishes and the ancient Greek worshipers of

Dionysus. They also bore some resemblance to the prophets of Baal as described in 1 Kings 18. 25-29. The latter fact has led to the theory that prophecy was not an independent institution in Israel but was borrowed from the Canaanites. In support of this view it is claimed that the Hebrew word for "prophet," *nabi,* was of foreign origin. But this claim is without adequate foundation. There is, it is true, no verbal root in Hebrew from which *nabi* could have been derived; but this is also true of many other Hebrew words, such as those for "blood" and "priest," which no one thinks of regarding as loan-words. Then, too, the name *nabi* is applied to a number of persons before the time of Samuel, such as Abraham (Gen. 20. 7, 17), Moses (Deut. 34. 10), Miriam (Exod. 15. 20), and Deborah (Judg. 4. 4). This does not necessarily mean that these persons were called prophets in their own time. We may have here simply the view of a later writer. But his view would be significant as representing the thought of his own day. It is also in harmony with Amos 2. 11f. and Jer. 7. 25, where it is implied that there was a continuous succession of prophets from the time of Moses down. Further, there is no indication anywhere in the Old Testament that Hebrew prophecy was ever looked upon as having any

connection whatsoever with the Canaanites. Everything points in the opposite direction. The prophets, for instance, are in several cases (Amos 2. 11; 2 Kings 10. 15ff.; and Jer. 35) brought into close relation with the Nazirites and Rechabites, both of whom represented reactions against Canaanitic institutions rather than dependence upon them. Likewise, the prophetic dress, the hairy mantle, points back to the wilderness period. It is, then, in the highest degree probable that prophecy in Israel goes back to the very beginning of the nation's history.

But while prophecy did not originate in the time of Samuel, it seems to have received a new impulse and to have undergone a marked development in his day. For one thing, it took on the character of a group movement. Previously, it seems to have been confined to individuals. Here and there a person was seized with the Spirit of God (compare Judg. 5. 12; 6. 34; 14. 6, 19). But in the time of Samuel whole groups of men were thus affected. The prophetic spirit became contagious. The reason for this new development was probably the national and religious crisis brought on by the victories of the Philistines. The ark had been captured, Shiloh desecrated, and the land in large part subdued. It was natural that this critical state of affairs should awaken intense excitement, and that

whole bodies of men should now be swept away by the same spirit of ecstasy which had heretofore laid hold only of individuals. Then, too, this group movement tended to make the prophets more aggressive. Previously they seem to have waited for people to call upon them, simply answering such questions as were asked. Now they take the offensive. They enter into the life of the people and seek to direct the course of events. They thus become a new and significant factor in the history of the nation.

Furthermore, it seems not improbable that a change took place at this time in the content of their teaching. Previously they had dealt chiefly with the present; now they begin to deal more and more with the future, and not only with details of the future, but with the whole future development of the kingdom of Jehovah. In a word, their message becomes eschatological. To some extent this outlook into the future is inherent in the very nature of religion, and so must have been at least implicit in the work of Moses. But the ecstatic character of the prophetic movement in the time of Samuel naturally tended to bring it into prominence. For ecstasy thrives on the contrast between the real and the ideal, and on the expectation of the speedy realization of the ideal. Traces of this early eschatology are probably to be found in Num. 23 and 24; 2 Sam.

7. 8-16; and Gen. 49. 8-12. But the clearest evidence of its existence is furnished by the later written prophecies. These prophecies contain eschatological conceptions which were manifestly not original with the canonical prophets themselves. They also contain allusions to eschatological ideas current among the people (Amos 5. 18; Isa. 28. 15). The origin of these conceptions must, then, be found in the period anterior to the eighth century before Christ, and, if so, it is most naturally to be looked for in the early prophetic circles.

During the two centuries intervening between Samuel and Elijah we have no reference to the prophetic bands. Nevertheless, during this period they seem to have grown in importance and influence. In the time of Elijah we find four hundred of them at the court of Ahab (1 Kings 22. 5ff.). The pious chamberlain, Obadiah, hid one hundred of them from the wrath of Jezebel (1 Kings 18. 13). They were located at various places throughout the land—Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and Samaria. From being itinerant bands they had now become settled colonies. They were known as "sons of the prophets," which means that they formed guilds or corporations. They lived together, had their meals in common, and some of them at least were married (2 Kings 4. 1-7, 38-41). They seem also to have

been under the direction of men of superior spiritual endowment, such as Elijah and Elisha. This no doubt tended to moderate their ecstatic excitement and to direct their energies along higher and more fruitful lines.

One naturally wonders what the members of these prophetic guilds busied themselves with from day to day. They seem to have been supported by the gifts of others (1 Kings 14. 3; 2 Kings 5. 15; 8, 9ff.; Amos 7. 12; Mic. 3, 5), so that they must have had most of their time to themselves. No doubt they devoted considerable attention to music and song and such other exercises as would prepare them to receive the word of Jehovah; for their chief function was to declare the divine will wherever and whenever it was called for or needed. It is probable also that, like the Christian monks, they interested themselves in literature. The history of the nation would naturally have its important lessons for them. They therefore cherished the traditions handed down from the past. Then, too, they probably devoted themselves with special interest to the future, the development of the kingdom of God, the plan of Jehovah. This, indeed, seems to have been their peculiar sphere, the main theme of their reflections.

Like all similar institutions, the prophetic guilds were exposed to the danger of corruption.

This grew partly out of the fact that they were dependent for their support upon the gifts of others. They were consequently in danger of delivering such messages as would serve their own selfish ends. To those who supplied their wants they cried, "Peace," but against those who refused to do so they prepared war (Mic. 3. 5). This seems to have been a serious evil in the time of the canonical prophets, though, judging from the story of Gehazi (2 Kings 5. 20ff.), it was probably not unknown in earlier times. Then, again, there was danger of formalism and professionalism. Prophecy had had its origin in intense earnestness. The ecstatic excitement of the early prophets had been, in large part at least, an expression of genuine enthusiasm. This was no doubt also the case with the later prophets in seasons of peril and special urgency. But at other times their excited demeanor was probably cultivated in an artificial way and so came to be chiefly neurotic in character with little if any spiritual element in it. The prophetic order thus deteriorated, losing the moral power it once possessed.

Hence when we come to the eighth century we find a sharp cleavage in the ranks of the prophets. A foreshadowing of this cleavage appears in the case of Micaiah and the four hundred prophets who gathered about Ahab (1 Kings 22. 5ff.).

But not until a century later did the cleavage become serious. It then gave rise to what are known as the false prophets, who are referred to again and again in the prophetic books. These prophets are commonly opposed to the canonical prophets, but this does not mean that they embraced all of the lower rank of prophets. Many of the rank and file of the prophetic order were true prophets of Jehovah, and were ready to seal with their blood their loyalty to the truth (2 Kings 9. 7; 21. 10-16; Jer. 26. 20-23). As over against these, however, there were large numbers who fell under the baneful influences of professionalism, divining for money, and still others who unconsciously yielded to the dominant national spirit, allowing themselves to be blinded by the hopes and wishes of the people.

Prophets of this type naturally contradicted the gloomy messages of the canonical prophets, announcing peace when there was no peace and encouraging hope when there was no hope. Hence they are called false prophets. This, however, does not mean that they were intentional deceivers. They were, rather, self-deceived. This was possible because true prophecy had in the course of centuries undergone a change. At the outset it was both national and ethical. Later it became almost exclusively ethical. But this change was not accepted by all the prophets:

many reacted against its apparently antinational tendency, and in so doing were perfectly sincere. While, then, they were really prophesying "out of their own heart," and following their own spirit without having seen anything (Ezek. 13. 2ff.), they themselves thought they were declaring the true word of Jehovah. It was so in the case of the four hundred prophets who encouraged Ahab to go up to Ramoth-Gilead against the Syrians—a fact which Micaiah himself acknowledges in an indirect way by ascribing their message to a lying spirit which Jehovah had placed in their mouth (1 Kings 22. 22). It was probably so also in the case of Hananiah, who, in opposition to Jeremiah, incited revolt against Nebuchadrezzar, predicting that within two years the Babylonian yoke would be broken (Jer. 28). "If," says Ezekiel, "the prophet be deceived and speak a word, I, Jehovah, have deceived that prophet" (14. 9). It is impossible, then, to regard all the so-called false prophets as impostors. They, rather, represent a lower type of prophecy, which, like true prophecy, began with the fusion of national and ethical interests, but which, unlike true prophecy, allowed the national to predominate over the ethical.

From the rank and file of the prophetic order we now turn to those individual prophets who

stand out conspicuously in the history and literature of Israel. These men are usually divided into two classes—the literary and preliterary prophets. The former correspond to our canonical prophets; the latter are the distinguished prophets of earlier times, of whom we have accounts in the historical books of the Old Testament. We take up the latter first.

Of the preliterary prophets there are two of special importance—Samuel and Elijah. To them we shall devote chief attention. But before taking them up we need to consider the relation of Moses to prophecy. He is himself referred to as a prophet in Hos. 12. 13, and in Deut. 18. 15, 18 is spoken of as a representative of the highest type of a prophet. There can also be no doubt that he was imbued with the true prophetic spirit. In view of this, one might be inclined to class him with the preliterary prophets. But to do so would be to misrepresent his true historical position. The traditional view which distinguishes him from the prophets is justified. It was he who laid the foundation of Israel's national and religious life. Before his time the Israelites seem to have been polytheists. They worshiped nature gods. Moses established among them the worship of one God, Jehovah, who in a marvelous way had delivered them from the Egyptians and thus proven himself to be not only

a God of nature but the God of history. Such a wonderful God naturally demanded from his people complete surrender and absolute obedience. His worship, therefore, was in essence ethical from the outset (Amos 2. 10; 5. 25; Hos. 2. 15; 9. 10; Jer. 2. 2ff.). It was also imageless, and the conditions of the time made it centralized. We have consequently in the work of Moses the germ of the whole subsequent religious development in Israel. He was the great creative personality in her history. He opened up the fountain from which the later stream of prophecy flowed forth. Or, to use a figure borrowed from Cornill, the prophets simply put out at interest the pound they inherited from Moses. His work was the presupposition of theirs.

The figure of Samuel stands out conspicuously in the prophetic narratives of the Old Testament. But it is not easy to determine exactly in what his significance lay. Some have tried to reduce him to a "seer of a small town, known only as a clairvoyant, whose information concerning lost or strayed property was reliable." But his reputation in later times makes it incredible that he should have been such an humble personage. Moreover, there are indications in the very earliest narratives (1 Sam. 9. 1 to 10. 15; 11. 1-16) that in his own time he was widely known and had a mission to the nation as well as to individ-

uals. Saul's uncle, for instance, only needs to hear his name mentioned in order to be at once interested in what he had said to his nephew (1 Sam. 10. 14f.). The very fact also that Samuel anointed Saul to be king is evidence that his own interests were by no means local and private (1 Sam. 9. 11; 10. 1). Accordingly it is probable that the later representations of him and his work (2 Sam. 3. 19ff.; 7; 8; 10. 17-27; 12; 15) have a substantial historical basis. In any case, the times in which he lived were critical. The very existence of the nation was at stake. And under those circumstances it was he who first saw the need of a monarchy as the one way of saving Israel politically, and who pointed out the new king. He thus introduced a new era in the history of Israel. He brought in a new form of government, and in the person of the king gave an outward and visible expression to the religious unity of the people.

Much stress has been laid upon an annotation found in 1 Sam. 9. 9, which originally belonged after verse 11. We here read that "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer." From this it is inferred that the name "prophet" was not applied to Samuel in

his own day. He was then called a seer. And it is true that he is to be distinguished from the members of the prophetic bands of his day. He was a different kind of person. None of their wild frenzy belonged to him. He was a calm, clear-sighted man. But it does not follow from the above annotation that he was not called a prophet (*nabi*) by the people of his own time. All that can be justly deduced from this verse is that in the annotator's day it was customary to say "Let us go to the prophet," and not "Let us go to the seer." But that the expression, "Let us go to the prophet," was not used in Samuel's time is nowhere stated. The probability, as we have already seen, is that the name *nabi* was in current use before his day, and was on occasion applied to him as well as to other seers.

Exactly what relation Samuel sustained to the prophetic bands of his time is not certain. In one passage (1 Sam. 19. 18-24) he is represented as standing at their head, but this passage is usually regarded as belonging to a late date and as not strictly historical. That he, however, had some connection with them is *a priori* probable. He may to some extent have directed their activities, as did Elijah and Elisha later, and so may have used them in furthering his own national purposes. In any case, he must have had some way of bringing his influence to bear upon the

religious life of his day. For the situation was critical religiously as well as politically. Under the depressing influence of Philistine overlordship there was danger of syncretism and apostasy from Jehovah. Some powerful stimulus was needed to guard against these dangers. And if the later traditions concerning Samuel have any basis in fact, there can be no doubt that he to a large extent furnished this stimulus, and along with it quickened the national consciousness to a point where it was ready to accept the leadership of Saul and to present a united front against the Philistine oppressor.

Between the time of Samuel and that of Elijah we have the prophets Nathan, Gad, and Ahijah, and in Elijah's own time Micaiah. These men might be called the minor prophets of the preliterary period. Very little is recorded of them. But from what has come down to us it is clear that they stood as representatives of the morals, customs, and faith of the past. They watched with suspicion the new developments in the monarchy, as Samuel also seems to have done (1 Sam. 15). Anything that indicated a declining faith in Jehovah they condemned. For this reason Gad denounced the census taken by David (2 Sam. 24). He saw in it a tendency on the part of the king to trust unduly in his newly won political power. For this reason, also, Ahijah

incited Jeroboam to revolt and predicted the division of the monarchy. (1 Kings 11. 29ff.) This division was a penalty for the worldly and idolatrous tendencies of Solomon's reign. We likewise have the same loyalty to the righteous God of the fathers in Nathan's denunciation of the sin of David (2 Sam. 12). And Micaiah's repeated messages of evil are to be understood as expressions of antagonism to Ahab's violations of established right and faith.

It is in Elijah, however, that this attitude of the preliterary prophets comes to its fullest and most striking expression.

There are three scenes in his life that stand out conspicuously: first, his conflict with Jezebel and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18. 16-46); second, his journey to Horeb the mount of God (1 Kings 19. 1-18); and third, his announcement of doom upon the royal house because of the judicial murder of Naboth (1 Kings 21). In all of these he testifies his loyalty to the God of Sinai. In his conflict with the queen he reasserts the ancient jealousy of Jehovah, a jealousy that would brook no other god in Israel, and, least of all, a nature-god like the Tyrian Baal. In his denunciation of the murder of Naboth he proclaims again the righteousness of the God of the fathers, a righteousness that guards the interests of all and knows no distinction between high

and low, but requires obedience from all alike. And by his journey to the mount of God he declares symbolically that the aim of all his work is to defend and revive the law and faith of Sinai.

But while Elijah thus harks back to the founder of Israel's religion, his own teaching was not a mere revival of that of Moses. Altered conditions demanded an altered message. And not only was this the case. Religious thought in Israel during the intervening centuries had not been at a standstill. The prophets had been conservers of the past, but they had also been creators of new conceptions of the future. Sinai had not been to them a Jacob's pillow to sleep upon, but a Jacob's ladder to climb by. Consequently, we are not surprised to find new elements in the teaching of Elijah. Unfortunately, the reports of his words are extremely meager. But, meager as they are, they show the direction of his thought. For one thing, he declares that a great judgment is to come upon the people because of their apostasy. When this judgment has done its work a mere remnant will be left. This was the content of the "still small voice" that came to the prophet at Horeb (1 Kings 19. 9-18). And from the fact that the king calls him the "troubler of Israel" (1 Kings 18. 17) it may be inferred that this message of doom was one that fell frequently from his lips. It is also

probable that it did not stand alone but formed a part of a larger conception, that of a plan of God, an idea that was basal in the thought of the canonical prophets.

But even more significant than Elijah's message of doom was his attitude toward Baal. It is evident from the ridicule the prophet pours upon Baal that he does not believe in his existence (1 Kings 18. 27). Baal is a mere shadow. And if so, the conclusion is inevitable that all other gods, except Jehovah, are mere shadows. They have no real existence. Jehovah is God alone. Elijah himself probably did not draw this theoretical conclusion. The problem that confronted him was a practical one. The worship of the Tyrian Baal had been introduced into Israel and had aroused the wrath of Jehovah. It satisfied the prophet's purpose, therefore, to declare that Baal was no god. But had other gods appeared in Israel, it is certain that he would have made the same declaration concerning them, for he had the firm inner conviction that there was no god but Jehovah (1 Kings 18. 21). This conviction was, indeed, implicit in the teaching of Moses. But a special occasion was needed to call it forth, and this occasion was furnished by the apostasy in the time of Ahab. We conclude, consequently, that Elijah was the first in whom the practical monotheistic conviction came to clear

expression. He elevated Jehovah above all other gods into a category by himself. And not only that: he also elevated him so completely above his own people that their fortunes were seen to be wholly subordinate to his purposes. He does not exist for their sakes, but they exist for his sake. Loyalty to him is more important than the mere existence of the nation. This position taken by Elijah is the high point of preliterary prophecy. It implies that Mosaism is in principle a world-religion.

Important, however, as is the place of Elijah in the history of religion, he does not himself seem to have accomplished much in the way of external reform. This task he committed to his successor, Elisha, who was a man of more practical turn of mind. Elisha, for instance, did not hesitate to resort to conspiracy to accomplish his ends (2 Kings 9. 1ff.). He instigated the bloody revolution of Jehu, and thus swept the house of Ahab from the throne and extirpated the worship of the Tyrian Baal from Israel.

We turn now to the literary prophets. This designation of the canonical prophets is misleading in so far at it tends to create the impression that they were writers rather than men of action. So far as the form of prophetic activity is concerned, it was not essentially different in

their case from what it had been in the case of their predecessors. Speech and action were quite as characteristic of them as of the earlier prophets. That they reduced their sermons to writing was simply incidental to their ministry. But it proved to be a very important incident. No single fact connected with the development of prophecy was more significant for the future of religion in Israel.

Why written prophecy originated in the eighth century before Christ is a question to which different answers have been given. Some ascribe it to the literary tendency of the age. Others attribute it to the failure of the prophets to accomplish what they desired by the spoken word. "It must," says Budde, "have been their very ill success, the unbelief of the people, that above all else compelled them to resort to the pen." In both of these answers there is more or less of truth. As literature came to be generally cultivated and men came to take interest and pride in the products of the pen, it was inevitable that the prophets, who were conscious of having a vital message to their countrymen, should not content themselves with the spoken word, but should reduce their utterances to written form. Then, too, the unbelief of the people furnished them a specific occasion for so doing. This motive was not wholly lacking before their time, as is clear

from the cases of Elijah and Micaiah; and it is by no means improbable that before the time of Amos there were written prophecies which have been lost. But in the eighth century the unbelief of the people seems to have been more general and more aggressive than heretofore. Evidence of this is furnished by the number and influence of the false prophets. It was natural, as a result, that the true prophets like Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah should turn to the future for vindication (Isa. 30. 8f.), and also entertain the hope that the written word might eventually accomplish what the spoken word had failed to achieve (Jer. 36. 3).

Another and more important question with reference to the eighth-century prophets has to do with the relation of their teaching to that of their predecessors. It is evident to the most casual reader that we have in Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah a very different emphasis from that which we find in the accounts of the ninth-century prophets. The great question at issue in the time of Elijah was whether Jehovah, and he alone, was to be worshiped in Israel. The problem, on the other hand, with which the literary prophets deal is the question *how* he is to be worshiped. This change of emphasis was perhaps due to the fact that the uprooting of Baal worship did not bring about the improvement expected. Indeed,

from the material point of view, conditions soon afterward grew worse. Israel suffered her deepest abasement at the hands of Syria in the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz. Hence it may naturally have been concluded that what Jehovah required of Israel was not only that he, and he only, be worshiped, but that he be worshiped in the right way. Not sacrifices and burnt offerings, but goodness and the knowledge of God was what he demanded. Almost exclusive stress was consequently placed by the eighth-century prophets upon righteousness as the one condition of salvation.

This possible historical connection between the literary and preliterary prophets is, however, a point of subordinate interest. The important question relates to the degree of originality to be ascribed to the literary prophets. How far does their teaching mark an advance beyond that of their predecessors? The tendency among Old Testament scholars of the past generation has been to exalt the prophets of the eighth century far above their predecessors and to regard them as the real creators of the higher spiritual element in Israel's religion. But this view is a mistaken conclusion drawn from the fact that we have a far more intimate knowledge of the teaching of the literary prophets than of that of their predecessors. The accounts of the earlier prophets in

the historical books are utterly inadequate. This is evident from what is recorded in Second Kings concerning the eighth-century prophets. Amos, Hosea, and Micah are not even mentioned, and the account of Isaiah fails altogether to give us a proper insight into the lofty spirituality of his thought. We cannot, as a consequence, fairly judge the teaching of the preliterary prophets by what we find in the historical books. If they had left us written reports of their utterances, the probability is we would find that they anticipated to a large extent the teaching of their literary successors. Such is certainly the conclusion favored by a study of the canonical prophets themselves. They betray no consciousness of being innovators. They give no indication of any break with the past. Indeed, the very reverse is the case. Theirs are "the old paths, where is the good way" (Jer. 6. 16). They are by nature conservative, as are all deeply religious men. What they aim to do is not to introduce new ideas but simply to call the people back to their old allegiance to Jehovah. In a word, they are reformers.

But it does not follow from this that there was nothing new in their teaching. All great reformers are also creative geniuses. The adaptation of any great and pregnant truth of the past to new conditions always requires original insight.

So it was with the eighth-century prophets. They attached themselves unequivocally to the past. At the same time their teaching marked an important step forward. This forward step did not consist so much in the introduction of new ideas as in the ethical deepening and clearer definition of ideas and convictions already present. It was so with their message of doom, with their conception of the ethical character of true religion, and with their monotheism. These ideas were not new, but they were given a clearness of expression, a depth of interpretation, and a wideness of application that had been unknown before. Consequently, we have in the work of the eighth-century prophets a notable advance in the direction of a complete release of Israelitic religion from national entanglements and its preparation for a world-wide mission. But this development was all so natural that there was no conscious break with the past. Had a pious Israelite of earlier times been permitted to read the prophecies of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, he would have said, as did a Mohammedan woman after reading a Christian book of devotion, "Why, that is what I have been trying to say all my life." Literary prophecy simply voiced the true piety of the past, brought it to self-consciousness, and gave it clearness of expression. It was thus merely the logical outcome of that higher

faith which had been current in Israel from the time of Moses down. This fact, however, detracts little, if any, from its significance. The appearance of the literary prophets marks the most important epoch in Israel's history next to that of Moses.

The enlargement of religious outlook introduced by the eighth-century prophets was closely connected with the political developments of the time, and from one point of view may be regarded as evoked by them. Not until Assyria appeared on the borders of Israel did it become a practical necessity to relate the power of Jehovah to the great world-empires, and not until then could the idea of a world-religion have naturally taken root in prophetic thought. But from another point of view, the appearance of the idea of the universal sway of Jehovah stands in striking contrast with the political developments of the time. Had something approaching monotheism appeared in Egypt and Assyria, it would not have been strange, for these kingdoms were practically world-powers, and under those circumstances it would have been only natural for the religious teachers of either land to conclude that their chief god was God of all the world. But that this idea should appear in two such small kingdoms as Israel and Judah, and that it should be proclaimed in them with such perfect confi-

dence at the very time they were going down to their ruin, is one of the most remarkable facts in the religious history of mankind. It has no parallel, and is so contrary to what we should naturally expect from the human mind and heart that one can hardly resist the conviction that it must to a special degree have been due to the Spirit of the living God.

The literary prophets may be conveniently arranged in three groups: first, those who appeared shortly before the fall of Samaria in B. C. 721; second, those who prophesied shortly before the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586; and, third, the prophets of the Restoration and the postexilic period. To the first class belong Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. Of these the first three are among the greatest of the prophets. Each represents an important aspect of God's revelation of himself. Micah, on the other hand, furnishes an instructive supplement to their teaching, but does not equal any one of them in importance. Still it is in his book that we have one of the greatest sayings of the Old Testament—a saying that sums up the teaching of his three contemporaries —"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (6. 8.) The second group of prophets includes Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk. These men witnessed

the decline and fall of Assyria and the rise of the new Babylonian empire. They also stood on the brink of the dissolution of their own national life. It was natural, therefore, that the two greatest of them, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, should lay stress upon those aspects of their religion which would persist after the fall of the nation, namely, personal piety and individual responsibility. The other three represent interesting side-currents in the life and thought of the people —Zephaniah the apocalyptic tendency, Nahum the antiforeign feeling, and Habakkuk the beginning of speculation in Israel; but none of them is of special significance. To the third group belong Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 40 to 66), Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Obadiah, Joel, and Jonah. Daniel is a late apocalypse (B. C. 165), and is not classed with the prophets in the Hebrew Bible. Of this group Deutero-Isaiah is by far the most important. In him the universal destination of Israel's religion received its clearest expression, and with him the mission proper of prophecy ceased. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi might still deal in a true prophetic spirit with the needs of the restored community; the author of Jonah might in a heart-moving narrative rebuke Israel for her reluctance in carrying out her divinely appointed mission to the world; and in Obadiah and Joel the old antiforeign feeling of the Jews

and their faith in a great day of Jehovah might again receive expression. But nothing especially significant was thus added to the legacy which Deutero-Isaiah and those who preceded him had left to subsequent generations. And, finally, the voice of the true prophet ceased to be heard in Israel (Psa. 74. 9).

This completes our survey of the history of prophecy. We now pass to the discussion of its nature.

Nature of Prophecy

Etymology has frequently been appealed to to determine the nature of prophecy, but it has not thrown much light upon the subject. The original meaning of the root from which the Hebrew word for "prophet" was derived is uncertain. A common theory is that it meant to "bubble" or "gush," the reference being to the excited or frenzied manner of speech of the early prophet. A parallel to this, it is claimed, is found in the Hebrew word *hittiph,* which is sometimes translated "prophesy," but primarily meant "to let drop." What the early prophets, we are told, let drop, was "slaver, as is usual with epileptics and madmen." But this derivation of the word *nabi* is in itself highly dubious, and in any case gives us no insight into the character of the later prophets. More significant and more probable

is the view which connects the word with the Assyrian verb *nabu,* meaning "to call," or "name," and so "announce." The *nabu,* or prophet, was then, the "announcer," or "herald," of the divine will. This derivation is confirmed to some extent by the Arabic, and furthermore expresses an essential characteristic of the prophet as he is known to us in history.

There are a number of other terms used in the Old Testament to designate a prophet. He is called a "man of God" (1 Sam. 9. 6; 1 Kings 17. 18), a "servant" of God, or Jehovah (1 Chron. 6. 49; 1 Kings 18. 36; Isa. 20. 3), a "messenger" of Jehovah (Isa. 42. 19), an "interpreter" (Isa. 43. 27), a "seer" (1 Sam. 9. 9), and a "watchman" (Ezek. 3. 17). These different terms all imply a close relation of the prophet to the Deity, each term expressing some aspect of that relationship, or of the prophet's mission, or of the way he attained to his religious insight. But the central idea contained in them all taken together is the same as that which we have just seen probably underlay the word *nabi:* the prophet was a mediator by speech between man and God.

It is worth noting in this connection that none of these terms expresses distinctly the idea of prediction.

This was also true of the English word

"prophet" several centuries ago. In the time of Elizabeth the regular church services were spoken of as "prophesyings." And in the seventeenth century Jeremy Taylor wrote a work entitled "The Liberty of Prophesying," by which he meant the liberty of preaching. The prefix "pro" in the word "prophet" does not mean "beforehand," as in such words as "progress" and "procession," but "instead of," as in the word "pronoun." The prophet, then, was not primarily one who foretold events, but one who spoke in God's stead. This view of the prophet is very clearly expressed in Exod. 7. 1, where Jehovah declares to Moses that he is to be as God to Pharaoh and that Aaron his brother is to be his prophet, that is, his spokesman (compare Exod. 4. 16). The idea of prediction, therefore, was manifestly a subordinate one in the Hebrew conception of prophecy. According to the Old Testament, the prophet was primarily and essentially a speaker for God. It was his function to declare to men the divine will and purpose. "Surely," says Amos (3. 7), "the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets." This secret, it is true, referred not infrequently to the future. But it was not the future as an unrelated event or group of events that was revealed to the prophets. It was the future as the expression and outcome

of the divine will and character. So that when future events were foretold by the prophets the significant thing in the prediction was not the mere unveiling of the future, but the moral quality of the prediction.

We come here upon the fundamental difference between the Hebrew prophet and the heathen diviner. But before we dwell further upon this point it will be instructive to consider the relation of these two personages to each other. There is, as we have seen, a common theory that prophecy was imported into Israel from without, that it was borrowed from the Canaanites. This theory we have rejected. But at the same time there can be no doubt that there was a considerable resemblance between the Israelitic prophets and those of other nations. This resemblance is implied in their common name. It is also implied in the fact that the heathen soothsayer Balaam is represented as a truly inspired prophet of Jehovah.

But heathen divination is a complex phenomenon, and must be analyzed before a true comparison between it and Hebrew prophecy can be made. It has been customary since ancient times to distinguish between artificial, or mediate, divination on the one hand and natural, or immediate, on the other. By "artificial," or "mediate," divination is meant the effort to ascertain the divine

will by means of external signs and omens. Liver inspection was especially common in Babylonia, but there, as elsewhere, many other methods were also employed, such as cup-divination, observation of the heavens, and the casting of lots. Furthermore, all events and phenomena that departed in the least degree from the ordinary course of things were supposed to have some mysterious significance, and in accordance with this supposition were interpreted by the diviners. It was this type of divination that was most common in the heathen world. Traces of it are also to be found in the Old Testament. We have there the casting of lots, and in the case of Joseph an instance of cup-divination (Gen. 44. 5). But the prophets themselves have nothing to do with "artificial" divination. They utterly spurn it.

By "natural," or "immediate," divination is meant the determination of the divine will or attainment of superhuman knowledge by means of dreams, visions, and the utterances of persons in a state of ecstasy. In these instances God is supposed to speak directly to the minds of men instead of through outward signs. Dreams are even yet mysterious in their origin; consequently, it is not strange that they should in ancient times have been looked upon as divine indications of good or evil fortune. Such significance was gen-

erally attributed to them by heathen peoples; and traces of the same view appear also in the Old Testament in the cases of Jacob, Joseph, Samuel, Solomon, and Daniel. Indeed, dreams seem to have been one of the most commonly accepted methods by means of which God was supposed to reveal himself in Israel (Num. 12. 6; Job 33. 14ff.; Joel 2. 28). But however common this view may have been among the rank and file of the prophets, the literary prophets themselves stood above it. Of none of them is it recorded that he received his message in a dream. On the contrary, Jeremiah disparages altogether the use of dreams as a means of revelation, and establishes a distinct contrast between the dreaming of dreams and the reception of the true word of Jehovah (23. 28).

Visions and states of ecstasy, on the other hand, were not unknown in the experiences of even the greatest of the prophets. Originally it would seem that seers and ecstatics were clearly differentiated from each other. The seers were men who had the gift of clairvoyance. Through vision and audition the Deity manifested himself to them and revealed to them things hidden from the sense-bound minds of men. Such persons as these figured in the ancient religions generally, but they were not at all so common as the interpreters of dreams, astrologers, and others who

sought by signs and omens to unveil the future or secure superhuman guidance. To this class belonged Balaam, who is described as one "who heareth the words of God, who seeth the vision of the Almighty, falling down and having his eyes open" (Num. 24. 4). Samuel also was a seer; indeed, the only Israelitic seer of whom we have any detailed account in the historical books. Of him it was currently reported that he was a man held in honor, and that everything that he said came surely to pass (1 Sam. 9. 6).

The ecstatics, as distinguished from the seers, were men who allowed themselves by music or otherwise to be worked up into an intense state of excitement, from the effects of which they lost either their normal self-control or self-consciousness. In this condition of holy frenzy it was supposed that they were possessed of the Spirit of God. Hence, whatever they uttered in such a state was thought to have oracular significance. Phenomena of this kind have appeared throughout the whole history of religion. They were present, as we have seen, in ancient Phœnicia and in early Israel. So prominent a feature, indeed, did they form in the life of the early prophetic bands that for centuries afterward the idea of madness continued to be linked with that of prophecy (2 Kings 9. 11; Hos. 9. 7; Jer. 29. 26).

But while the seer and ecstatic seem thus to have been originally distinct, they must have both had the same high-strung nervous organization, with a strong leaning toward the mystical and religious. When they came together it was natural that they should mutually influence each other and that the qualities of the one should tend gradually to coalesce with those of the other. This, at any rate, is what seems to have taken place in Israel, the result being the production of a new type of prophet, one to whom no complete analogue is to be found among other peoples. The seer felt the contagion of the ecstatic's intensity and passion. He ceased to wait for others to call upon him. He devoted himself no longer merely to such individual items of interest as were brought to his attention. His activity became continuous and aggressive. He threw himself into the midst of the life of the people, seeking with all the power at his command to stir them up to meet whatever emergency confronted them. The ecstatic on the other hand surrendered himself to the direction and restraint of the seer, subjecting himself to such discipline as the finer spiritual sense of the seer dictated. Passion and insight thus combined to produce the later Hebrew prophet. The wild frenzy of the ecstatic vanished. The visions of the seer continued, it is true, but gradually lost their significance. They

ceased to be a test of inspiration. Indeed, in Num. 12. 6-8 it is clearly implied that visions and dreams are an imperfect medium of revelation. The highest type is that represented by Moses, to whom God spake mouth to mouth. Audition, rightly understood, seems to be involved in the very idea of prophecy and so remained a permanent characteristic of the Hebrew prophets. But more and more stress came to be placed on the content of the prophetic message. Not how God spake to the prophets but what he said to them came to be regarded as the essential thing. A fine illustration of this is furnished by Deut. 13. 1-3, where it is declared that the message of a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, even if attested by a sign or miracle, is not to be accepted if at variance with one's fundamental religious convictions. The final test then of the truth of a prophetic utterance is to be found in the appeal which it makes to our religious nature.

It is here that the vital difference between the Hebrew prophet and the heathen diviner is to be found. There is, as we have seen, at some points a certain resemblance between them. The Israelitic prophets belonged to the same general class of persons as the heathen seers and ecstatics. They had a gift akin to that of clairvoyance. Only on this assumption can their consciousness as revealed in their written prophecies be under-

stood. But this was only an incidental feature of their work. The validity of their teaching was quite independent of it. And when we come to the content of their oracles as compared with the oracles of their heathen analogues, we find at once a world-wide difference. The heathen oracles that have come down to us are miscellaneous in character, dealing chiefly with subjects of a secular and practical nature. Wars, journeys, sicknesses, marriages, business enterprises, erection of houses—such are the topics dealt with. There is no underlying unity of thought, no constructive religious teaching. Hebrew prophecy, on the other hand, is based on definite principles. It is a rational institution. Its teaching is self-consistent, coherent, and constructive. It presents to the world, in spite of all differences in detail, a unitary conception of things, the first philosophy or, if the expression be allowed, theology of history—a theology, furthermore, which in its main outlines is still the faith of the leading races of the world.

A few years ago something of a sensation was created by Edward Meyer, of Berlin, who claimed to have discovered in certain Egyptian papyri evidence that an eschatological scheme, in all its essential features the same as that of the Hebrew prophets, was current in Egypt as early as B. C. 2000: "first a period of severe

affliction, the destruction of the government, the desolation of the land and its sanctuaries; then the glory of a Messianic kingdom under a righteous and God-beloved king of the ancient legitimate dynasty, to whom all peoples are subject." But subsequent investigation has shown that Meyer's interpretation of his Egyptian texts was hasty, that they say nothing about a Messiah, and that they simply describe a national catastrophe which is to be followed by a period of blessing and prosperity. Of such an idea as that of a plan of God, or that of his moral government of the world, or that of the coming of his kingdom, they do not furnish the slightest trace. These ideas are the unique product of Hebrew prophecy. Heathen divination nowhere provides a parallel to them.

Still Bernhard Stade has defined prophecy as a "branch of manticism." If this be correct, we have here a case where the branch is far more important than the tree, and bears a very different kind of fruit. The fact is that it is only in a superficial way that prophecy is connected with manticism, or divination. We can trace the history of prophecy back to its roots in divination. But this certainly does not make the two identical. Institutions are to be judged not by their roots but by their fruits. And so judged, prophecy must be declared to have only the

remotest relation to divination. The two stand at almost opposite poles. Such also is the judgment of Scripture. Isaiah (2. 6; 8. 19) condemns the practice of divination in Israel as one of the grounds for her rejection by Jehovah, and Deut. 18. 9-18 denounces every kind of diviner as an abomination unto Jehovah, declaring that in Israel the place of the diviner is to be taken by that of the prophet.

In view of this wide disparity between prophecy and divination, and especially in view of the superstitious or pathological character of the latter, it may at first seem strange that prophecy should ever have had any connection with it whatsoever. We are, it is true, familiar with the idea that chemistry had its origin in alchemy and astronomy in astrology. But the relation of the prophet to the diviner is more intimate than this. It is not merely historical. There is between the two a certain mental resemblance. A gift akin to that of clairvoyance was possessed by even the greatest of the prophets. To be sure, the cruder features of the heathen clairvoyant do not appear in the Israelitic prophet. The literary prophets, for instance, were not dependent for their messages upon visions. They "always retained a clear consciousness and distinct recollection of what they saw in spirit and what was said to them," and "they

never appeared before their auditors in a state of ecstasy." Plato's idea, that "inspired and true divination is not attained by anyone in his full senses, but only when the power of thought is fettered by sleep or disease or some paroxysm of frenzy," does not apply to them. They received their messages, at least for the most part, and did their work when in the full possession of their normal faculties. But after allowance has been made for all these differences, it is still true that something of the quality of the heathen seer clings to the Hebrew prophet. He had the power of presentiment, the faculty of peering into the future. He was to a certain extent what is to-day called a psychopath.

This fact has not been altogether acceptable to the modern mind. Hence, some have sought to explain it away. They have accounted for the predictions of the prophets by ascribing them to an extraordinarily fine moral sense, which led the prophets to conclude that the sins of their own day must be punished by some great national calamity. But this theory does not fit in well with the language of the prophets. "Thus saith the Lord" and other expressions that imply direct communications from the Deity can hardly be regarded as purely figurative. Then, too, it fails to account for the periods of silence during which no significant prophet appeared. These

periods, such as that during the reign of Manasseh, called for the voice of judgment quite as much as other periods. It would seem, then, that something else besides the fine moral sense of the prophets must have been responsible for their public appearance. In this connection we may remind ourselves that the first group of literary prophets—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah—all appeared shortly before the fall of Samaria in B. C. 721; and that the second group of literary prophets—Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk—all appeared shortly before the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586. This suggests that it was their presentiment of an approaching danger, and not simply their moral judgment, that led to their messages of doom. And this conclusion is strongly favored by the prophetic oracles themselves. The prophets had premonitions of impending events. These premonitions they ascribed to the word of God. Exactly what their psychological state was when Jehovah, as they said, spake to them, we do not know. Stade has suggested that we have here a case of split-personality, "the second I of the prophet taking the form of an object of religious faith." But this theory hardly solves the mystery of the prophetic consciousness, though it may indicate the form under which the divine word presented itself to the prophet's

mind. Anyhow, it is certain that the prophets had intuitions and premonitions which they distinguished from their own thoughts and ascribed to God (Jer. 42. 7).

The clairvoyant quality of the prophetic mind has no special interest for us to-day. What we look to the prophets for is moral instruction and inspiration. That they had a peculiar psychological endowment which enabled them to hear voices and to peer into the future does not especially concern us. Perhaps it would be something of a relief to us if it should be proven that they were not so endowed. In any case, we are disposed to look upon this feature of their life and work as wholly incidental, if not accidental. God might, we think, have taken men without any such quality of mind, and so filled them with his spirit of righteousness and wisdom that they would have spoken with as much conviction and sense of authority as did our canonical prophets. But whatever may have been theoretically possible, it is still true that God chose men of the other type as the chief organs of his self-revelation. Why he did so is a mystery of divine Providence, and perhaps will always remain such. One or two possible reasons, however, for the fact may be suggested. In the first place, men in that day were accustomed to look upon the marvelous and extraordinary as the one way in

which God manifested himself to men. Mental states of an abnormal or supernormal character were supposed to be especially clear indications of the Spirit's presence. Accordingly, it is not improbable that some unusual psychological experience was necessary at that time to create the conviction that a message had been received from God. The moral and spiritual nature was not yet sufficiently independent, was not yet sure enough of itself, to stand forth as the self-conscious voice of God himself. The choice of seers and ecstatics as the mediums of divine revelation may therefore be regarded as an accommodation on the part of God to the imperfect spiritual development of the time. Moreover, the undoubted influence which the fulfillment of the prophets' predictions had upon the ultimate acceptance of their spiritual messages makes it impossible for us to escape the conviction that these predictions, however subordinate they may be from our modern point of view, still had their place in the true word of God.

In the next place, this peculiar mental endowment was not characteristic of the prophets only. Many other great religious teachers have had it —Paul, for instance. This fact suggests that the capacity for visions and auditions may have had some close connection with the development of religion. It may have served the purpose of

disengaging the moral and spiritual nature of men from its sense-bound environment, and so of enabling it to come to its full and independent expression. For in its last analysis what we have in prophecy is simply the moral deeps of human nature breaking forth into the stream of human life and thought. Up to this time the moral nature of men had been limited, hampered in its development. It needed the help of seers and visionaries in order to come to itself and to assert itself against the competing interests of life. The supernormal gifts, then, of the prophets served an important purpose. They helped, so to speak, to put the moral and spiritual nature of men upon its feet, helped it to take its rightful place in human life as the one absolutely authoritative element in it.

One of the most remarkable things about the prophets is that they themselves recognized fully this subsidiary character of their extraordinary experiences. By means of them they knew they had received an insight into things divine which the common run of men did not possess. They had entered into the "counsel" of God, the "secret" of God, the "plan" of God, the "ways" of God, the "thoughts" of God. A great variety of terms were used to express the content of the revelation made to them. Still they laid no stress upon these experiences as such. However "hid-

den" from men in general the revelation might be, it was not esoteric in character. It did not require such supernormal experiences as they themselves had had in order to be appreciated. These experiences were special and of no abiding significance. The revelation itself, on the other hand, was adapted to all men; and it was so adapted because it was a true and lofty expression of the common ethical and spiritual nature of man. Tertullian once said that "the human heart is naturally Christian." By this he meant that the Christian life is simply human nature at its best. And so it is with the teaching of the prophets. They introduced no "mysteries" into human life, nothing abnormal or supernormal. They simply took the profoundest elements in human nature, by divinely granted insight deduced their implications, and then gave to them a brilliant and abiding expression. In a word, they did for the moral and spiritual nature of man what the Greek philosophers did for the human intellect.

The mention of the Greek philosophers suggests that they rather than the heathen diviners furnish the most instructive analogue to the Hebrew prophets. In its roots, prophecy is linked to divination, but in its fruits it bears a considerable resemblance to philosophy. These

two movements—Hebrew prophecy and Greek philosophy—have been the great creative forces in the spiritual and intellectual history of mankind. In method the two movements differ radically. "The philosopher," as some one has put it, "moves toward God through the world and man; the prophet comes from God to the world and man. The one is in search for God; the other is found of God; the one longs for certitude, the other has it." But this difference of method does not necessarily indicate a radical difference of source. It does not necessarily imply that the one movement was purely human and the other absolutely divine. Between the human and the divine there is no fixed line of demarcation. The two interpenetrate each other, and there is no way of completely separating them. Prophecy carries with it the idea of inspiration and revelation, not because there is no human element in it, but because it is the outgrowth of those loftiest elements of human nature which we instinctively and immediately associate with the idea of the Spirit of God. Philosophy, on the other hand, makes no claim to supernatural inspiration, not because there are no sparks of the divine in it, but because it is, for the most part, the outcome of that side of our nature which seems less closely linked with God. In prophecy it is preeminently the

heart and conscience that speak to us, in philosophy the intellect. The difference, then, between the method of the prophet and that of the philosopher finds its justification in the common conviction that the heart and conscience stand nearer to God than the intellect. God, therefore, it is believed, could speak more directly and distinctly through the intuitions of the Hebrew than the reason of the Greek. That this belief is correct cannot be demonstrated, but it is, nevertheless, an assumption that our nature, made as it is, can hardly escape. Were we pure intellects, "wholly brain," we would perhaps agree with Renan that "the greatest miracle on record is Greece." But constituted as we are, with unutterable yearnings after God, with souls that reach out irresistibly after love and righteousness, it is impossible that we should not see in the prophets of Israel and in Him who came to fulfill their work the supreme word of God.

In spite, however, of this difference of method and character, Greek philosophy in its final outcome arrived at a view of the world essentially similar to that of the Hebrew prophets. This is a remarkable and significant fact, that the only philosophic movement in the world which has run its full course ended in a spiritual view of the universe. We have in this fact a striking testimony alike to the unity and the essential

religiousness of human nature. Not only heart and conscience, but intellect as well, when it understands itself, turns inevitably toward God. There is, however, still a vital difference between the work of the prophet and that of the philosopher. The latter was never able to lay hold of the popular mind in the way that the prophet did. Some of the greatest of the Greek philosophers, for instance, protested against idolatry and denounced the use of images, but they made no impression on the popular religion. And so with the religious life as a whole; in spite of themselves the philosophers stood apart from it. They did not understand the secret of its power, and hence could do little to transform and elevate it. The prophets, on the other hand, were men of the people. No pride of intellect separated them from the mass of their countrymen. They knew what religion was; they knew what it meant to the average man; they had themselves experienced its power; above all else they were themselves men of the Spirit. Hence it was possible for them to lay firm hold of the popular religion, shake out of it its heathenism, and still preserve it strong and vital. The trouble with all purely philosophic attempts to remedy the shortcomings of religion is that the cure, if insisted on, always kills the patient. A purely rationalistic religion is no religion at all.

The great achievement of the prophets lies in the fact that, while purifying and spiritualizing religion to a degree never before attained, they still preserved its pristine power. This fact, once for all, sets them on high above all philosophers and sages.

But before we conclude our study of the nature of prophecy we must also distinguish the work of the prophet from that of two Old Testament characters, the priest and the apocalyptist. Priests and prophets formed the two classes of religious leaders in Israel. Occasionally the two offices were combined in the same person, as in the case of Samuel, but usually they were kept distinct. The priests gradually became a closed order, becoming confined at first to a single tribe, that of Levi, and later to a particular family, the house of Aaron. The prophets, on the other hand, never became a caste. No man was a prophet by birth, but only by divine call. In function, also, the prophets and priests differed. The priests dealt chiefly with the institutional side of religion. Their duties were sacrificial and judicial (Deut. 33. 10). It was their task to apply the law to concrete cases. The prophets, on the other hand, looked upon the law as a general rule of life, and sought to enforce its essential teaching. As Davidson has finely put it, "They went down into its deeps and came up

armed with its fundamental principle, the very concentration of its elements into one formula, the retributive righteousness of God; and with this terrible weapon they sought to curb and coerce the idolatrous and immoral leanings of their nation, and hold their hearts true to the allegiance of the living God."

From these facts it follows naturally that the priests were the conservative and the prophets the progressive force in the religious history of Israel. The great ideas of the Old Testament were not first embodied in the priestly law and later expounded and enforced by the prophets. The order was the reverse. First, the prophets gave expression to the great spiritual principles of Old Testament faith, and then later the priests reduced those principles to symbol and statute. Or, to put it differently, the prophets first moralized the popular religion, and then later the priests popularized the prophetic religion by putting it in concrete and symbolic form. To have recognized and proven this fact is the greatest single achievement of modern Old Testament scholarship. Not until this was done was it possible to give to the prophets their true place in Israelitic history and really appreciate their unique character and epoch-making significance.

Apocalyptic is the form of literature into

which prophecy gradually changed and by which it was eventually succeeded. Illustrations of it are to be found in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and some of the other later prophetic writings; and the book of Daniel as a whole is an apocalypse. The apocalyptist is commonly supposed to differ from the prophet in four regards. First, his work is pseudepigraphic. He hides himself behind some distinguished seer of the past such as Enoch or Daniel, into whose mouth he puts his own words. The prophet, on the other hand, maintains and asserts his own individuality, conscious that in all that he says he is impelled by the Spirit of God. Secondly, the apocalyptist is a writer rather than a preacher. His messages are the product of the study rather than the arena. The reverse is the case with the prophet. He is primarily a preacher, a man of affairs in living contact with the world about him, and only incidentally an author. Thirdly, the apocalyptist is imitative. He simply takes the ideas handed down from the past and works them up into new forms. The prophet, on the other hand, is creative. He is a pioneer in the kingdom of God, exploring new territory, originating new conceptions. Fourthly, the interests of the apocalyptist are primarily eschatological. His eye is fixed on the future. He depicts the marvelous things that are soon to occur, and having no real knowl-

edge of the world about him often represents them in a fantastic way. Not so, however, the prophet. His feet are planted on the earth. He knows the actual forces round about him, sees God in them, and so gives us what may be termed a historical or natural representation of the future.

Such is the common characterization of the apocalyptist and prophet in their relation to each other; and in an abstract and ideal sense it may be accepted as correct. In reality, however, there was no such sharp antithesis between the prophet and the apocalyptist as is here implied. In every apocalyptist there was more or less of the prophet, and in every prophet more or less of the apocalyptist. This was especially true as regards eschatology, and true to a much larger extent than has commonly been supposed. The current view is that Old Testament eschatology grew up along with or as a result of the work of the literary prophets. It was, therefore, almost exclusively a characteristic of the later prophets and the apocalyptists. But this view has in recent years been shown to be incorrect. A group of German scholars, among whom Gunkel, Gressmann, and Sellin are the most prominent, have made it clear that the eschatology of the Old Testament, instead of being the product of literary prophecy, antedated it. Before the time of Amos there was in Israel a developed escha-

tology. It was probably cultivated in the prophetic schools, and was more or less widely current among the people.

This discovery is the most important recent contribution to the correct understanding of the literary prophets. It has given to them a new background, and has set their teaching in quite a new light. Not only is this true of individual passages, here and there, but also of their whole message. It is now clear that the prophets in their conception of the divine presence and operation in the world did not reckon simply with natural and historical forces. Nor did they address themselves to a people completely sunk in religious naturalism. There were circles in Israel in which the atmosphere was vibrant with fear and hope, groups of people who believed in the approach of a great day of Jehovah, a day of universal terror. On that day the nations of the world would be overthrown, but Israel, as the chosen of Jehovah, would be rescued.

To people holding such beliefs it was that the literary prophets came with their message, and to them they announced that the day of Jehovah was now at hand, and that, whatever it might mean to other nations, it was to be to Israel, not a day of salvation, but a day of doom. This doom was to be brought about by foreign invasion. But it was not to be simply a political

catastrophe; it was to be a great crisis in the history of the whole world; it was to introduce a kind of final judgment, and so bring about the goal toward which the universal plan of God was moving. There was thus an eschatological element in it. The day of Jehovah was not simply a day of captivity for Israel, a day of punishment for her sins; it was the culmination of a divine plan that had significance for the entire world, the inauguration of a new era in the history of mankind.

From this fact it is clear that Jehovah was regarded by the prophets not only as the God of history but also as the God of destiny. There was in his relation to Israel a superhistorical element. He represented to them not only the iron hand of historical necessity, but also the transcendent power of the eternal Judge and Ruler of men. Only as this truth is grasped are we able fully to appreciate the absoluteness of the prophet's message and the finality with which it was delivered. The prophet never spoke as a mere social reformer nor as a mere practical statesman. He never dealt with merely historical forces, for to the very core of his being he was a religious teacher. And religion by its very nature cannot be confined to the purely historical. Instinctively and irresistibly, it breaks through the confines of the temporal and empirical and

lays hold of the eternal. In order, then, to understand the teaching of the prophets, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that from their point of view they were dealing with eternal issues. What death means to us to-day, the day of Jehovah meant to them. It was something final and eternally significant. It marked, not the end of everything, but the beginning of a new era, in which God would be present in a manner and to a degree that he had not been present before.

From this it follows that the prophets were not simply preachers of repentance. They were also the heralds of a new kingdom. It was their task to announce the coming of Jehovah. No element in their teaching was more common to all of them than this, and none more fundamental. It binds all their utterances together into unity, and connects them also with the fuller revelation of a later day.

CHAPTER II

AMOS THE PROPHET OF MORAL LAW

Some Old Testament characters have suffered severely at the hands of modern critics. Abraham, for instance, is declared by the more radical to be a myth. Moses, they say, had nothing whatsoever to do with the Law that bears his name; indeed, his very existence has been denied. Samuel, they claim, was not a judge or prophet, but simply "the seer of a small town, . . . known only as a clairvoyant, whose information concerning lost or strayed property was reliable." David, they confidently assert, not only did not write any of the Psalms, but was a man of very crude, half-barbarous religious conceptions. Solomon, they hold, instead of being remarkable for his wisdom, was merely a shortsighted Oriental despot. And so there are many others who have been shorn of much, if not all, of the honor that once attached to their names by the ruthless knife of criticism.

This, however, is not the case with the prophet Amos. Much of the distinction he now enjoys is due to the work of the critics. It is they who

have given him his present exalted position in biblical history. A century ago he was simply one of the minor prophets. No special significance attached to him. He was not regarded as original in thought, and his style was supposed to be that of a rustic, lacking in refinement. But observe what the pillars of Old Testament scholarship now say of him. "The book of Amos," says Cheyne, "forms a literary as well as a prophetic phenomenon." "To the unprejudiced judgment," says W. Robertson Smith, "the prophecy of Amos appears one of the best examples of pure Hebrew style. The language, the images, the grouping are alike admirable; and the simplicity of the diction . . . is a token, not of rusticity, but of perfect mastery." "There is nowhere," says Harper, "to be found in the Old Testament an example of a stronger or purer literary style." "His language," says Driver, "is pure, his style classical and refined." And more striking still are the testimonies to his importance as a religious teacher. Wellhausen says that he "was the founder of the purest type of a new phase of prophecy." Marti declares that he is "one of the most prominent landmarks in the history of religion." Kuenen speaks of him and his immediate successors as "the creators of ethical monotheism," and Cornill describes him as "one of the most marvelous and incompre-

hensible figures in the history of the human mind, the pioneer of a process of evolution from which a new epoch of humanity dates."

In this new estimate of Amos there is a large element of exaggeration. He was not so original as these critics claim. His teaching had its roots in the past. It was the natural outgrowth of the religious thought in Israel before his time. It did not flash upon the world as something altogether novel and unexpected. As one reads the book of Amos one is reminded of Emerson's words to Walt Whitman. "I greet you," he said, "at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere for such a start." The type of thought which Amos represents cannot, as the Germans say, have been "shot out of a pistol." It "must have had a long foreground somewhere." It must have been prepared for by centuries of reflection on the deep things of God. The same is also to be said of the literary style of Amos. It points to a long antecedent literary activity in Israel. Amos cannot have created it outright. He must have had his literary models. He was not, then, such a prodigy of originality as some moderns would make out.

Nevertheless, he was a great and significant personality. The old view did not do him justice. It failed to recognize the fact that he was

the first of the literary prophets, and as such represented an important step forward in the religious history of Israel. This forward step did not consist so much in the announcement of new ideas as in the clarification and spiritualization of religious thought in general. But it was not on that account any the less important. The great need of the people of Israel in the eighth century before Christ was that the heathen elements which had crept into their life and worship in the course of centuries should be eliminated. And this need the literary prophets set themselves to meet. They revived the Mosaic ideal; they taught the people the essential nature of true worship; they made it clear that Jehovah was above everything else a God of righteousness, and that as such he cared nothing for the special privileges of Israel or for rites and ceremonies. What he alone required was holy living. They thus moralized religion, and not only moralized it, but also universalized it; for the God in whose name they spoke was not only God of Israel but of all the world. Their work, therefore, prepared the way for Christianity and for the world-wide sway of a religion of righteousness and love. Accordingly, it is no small distinction to have initiated this movement. Even if Amos had no other claims to our admiration, this fact alone would entitle him to be

classed with the beacon lights of prophecy. But he was not simply the first of the literary prophets. He was in and of himself a striking character with a striking message, and, as such, is abundantly deserving of our careful study.

Of the life of Amos we know very little, nothing, indeed, except what we find in his book. From the latter we learn that he lived in the days of Jeroboam II (B. C. 781-740.). As a long period of prosperity seems to lie back of the prophet, we conclude that his ministry fell in the second half of Jeroboam's reign, probably about B. C. 750. We are also told that his home was Tekoa, a town twelve miles south of Jerusalem. Tekoa was situated on the top of a high hill twenty-seven hundred feet above the sea, and so offered a commanding view over the desolate region round about. This environment no doubt had its influence on the growing mind of the prophet. G. A. Smith thinks it clear from his book that Amos must have "haunted heights, and lived in the face of wide horizons." Such a conclusion as this might naturally be drawn from 4. 13; 5. 8, 9; and 9. 5, 6. But, unfortunately, these three passages are commonly assigned to a later hand. And it hardly relieves the situation to be told, as we are, by the same author, that, while this is true, "no one questions their right to the place which some great spirit

gave them in this book—their suitableness to its grand and ordered theme, their pure vision and their eternal truth." The chief reason for denying these passages to Amos is that they disturb the continuity of thought. But this is not true of 4. 13, and as for the other two passages it is possible that they have been displaced from their original connection. Then, too, it is to be observed that sudden and unexpected flashes of thought are characteristic of Amos. He likes to startle his hearers by some bold and surprising turn of expression that gives to his discourse a new background (3. 2; 4. 4; 9. 7). Therefore it is not improbable that these disputed "nature-passages" belong to Amos; and, if so, they illustrate impressively the sense of natural grandeur nourished in him by his mountain home.

While Amos was a resident of Judah, his prophetic message was delivered in and to Israel. This fact raises an interesting question with reference to the relation of his message to Judah. Did Amos mean to except Judah from the doom pronounced upon Israel and the neighboring peoples? Or did he mean to include Judah in the condemnation of the northern kingdom? At first it might seem that this question was definitely answered by 2. 4, 5. But this passage, as compared with the other oracles of doom, is so general and colorless that it is commonly and

justly, at least in its present form, assigned to a later hand. There are, however, other indications that Amos had no thought of sparing the southern kingdom. In 6. 1ff. the dwellers in Zion are condemned along with those in Samaria; in 3. 1, 2 "the whole family" brought up from Egypt is addressed; 2. 10 likewise applies to the entire nation, and 6. 14 probably defines the limits of the whole Hebrew people rather than those of simply the northern kingdom. In addition to this, there was no reason, as we learn from Isaiah, why Judah should not have come under the same condemnation as Israel. Moral and religious conditions were essentially the same in both kingdoms, and that a man of such stern and impartial temper as Amos should have exempted Judah from punishment because of narrow patriotic motives is, of course, incredible. We must, therefore, hold that Amos meant to include Judah in the common doom that was to befall Israel and the surrounding nations.

But if so, the question still remains as to why Amos chose Bethel rather than Jerusalem as the scene of his ministry. For this choice there must have been some reason. The probable answer is that he looked upon the two branches of the Israelitic people as essentially one, and that of the two the northern was the more important.

The center of the national life was to be found there. Bethel, therefore, the royal sanctuary of the northern realm, was a strategic place for a prophet to begin his ministry. His message would there produce the most immediate and powerful effect. Furthermore, it is to be borne in mind that the account of the ministry of Amos which has come down to us is extremely fragmentary. Only one incident from it is recorded, namely, the prophet's conflict with the priest Amaziah (7. 10-17). This conflict probably put an end to the activity of Amos in Bethel. But from this it by no means follows that he may not have worked elsewhere, in Judah as well as in Israel. It is indeed *a priori* improbable that such a man as he was permanently silenced.

Amos disclaims being a prophet or the son of a prophet (7. 14). By this he means that he did not belong to the prophetic order, and so had not received the training of a professional prophet. By occupation he was a shepherd and "a dresser of sycamore trees" (1. 1; 7. 14). There is some question as to what the function of "a dresser of sycamore trees" was, and some question also as to whether this is the correct translation of the original. But, in any case, Amos here designates himself as a man of lowly station. He belonged to the poorer classes and made his living by humble toil. In view of this fact one

naturally wonders how he acquired the degree of culture which he manifestly possessed. The answer is that conditions in the East were different from what they are with us. "Among the Hebrews," as W. Robertson Smith says, "knowledge and oratory were not affairs of professional education, or dependent for their cultivation on wealth and social status. The sum of book-learning was small; men of all ranks mingled with that Oriental freedom which is foreign to our habits; shrewd observation, a memory retentive of traditional lore, and the faculty of original observation took the place of laborious study as the ground of acknowledged intellectual preeminence." The social position of Amos, then, was no bar to his equipping himself with the culture of the day. His eyes and ears were both kept open. From travelers he learned of Assyria, of Damascus, of Egypt, and of the smaller nations round about Israel. Indeed, he may himself have visited these lands. He knew something of their history and of present conditions in them. His own people he watched closely. With their past history he was thoroughly familiar. He knew that Jehovah had brought them up from the land of Egypt, that he had led them forty years in the wilderness, that he had delivered into their hands the land of the Amorite, and that he had raised up for

them prophets and Nazirites for their instruction (2. 9-12). He also knew that in spite of all this they had been a wayward people, and that to recall them from their evil way Jehovah had sent them famine and drought, blasting and mildew, war, pestilence, and earthquake (4. 6-11), but all to no avail. At present they were prosperous. But this fact did not deceive the prophet. His keen eye pierced the thin veil of material prosperity, and saw beneath it an advanced stage of decay. So corrupt was Israel that something serious, he felt, must occur before long. He watched, therefore, the course of affairs round about him, both at home and abroad, with the keenest interest, and kept his ear close to the ground waiting for the footfall of coming events.

It is a matter of interest to know how the prophetic call came to him. He himself says that Jehovah "took" him from following the flock. This implies a sudden seizure by a power not of himself. Such is also the purport of 3. 8, where the prophet says: "The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?" There was, as it were, a burning fire shut up in his bones which compelled him to speak. Someone has said that there are two classes of preachers—the good preachers who have something to say, and

the poor preachers who *have* to say something. But there is yet another and higher class. It consists of those who both have something to say and who *have* to say it. Such are the prophets. Such a one was Amos. He did not, simply as a result of reflection on conditions at home and abroad, conclude that Assyria would probably conquer Israel and that it was therefore his duty, a duty imposed by Jehovah, to declare this truth to the people of Israel. It is a mistake to suppose that the peril from Assyria was so manifest in the time of Amos that "what requires explanation is not so much that Amos was aware of it as that the rulers and people of Israel were so blind to the impending doom" (W. Robertson Smith). As a matter of fact, Amos nowhere mentions the Assyrians by name, unless we follow the Septuagint and read in 3. 9 "Assyria" instead of "Ashdod." No doubt, he thought at times of Assyria as the instrument of Jehovah's wrath (5. 27), but he does not say so definitely. On this point he was apparently uncertain (3. 9-12). And such we know was the case with Hosea (9. 3; 11. 5; 8. 13; 10. 6). Doom was to come, but whether from Egypt or Assyria was left undetermined. It might come from either land. So it was not political calculation that lay at the root of Amos's message of judgment. That he was gifted with

political insight, superior to that of the professional politicians of his day, is open to question. In any case, he nowhere bases his message upon considerations of this kind. That Israel was to go into captivity came to him rather as an intuition, and an intuition of such an unusual character that he had no doubt of its divine source. In the attainment of this intuition, or premonition, political observation no doubt played a part, as did also reflection on the sins of Israel. The latter, indeed, was more important than the former. But over and above all rational processes of this kind, there was in the call of the prophet an element that defies analysis, a mysterious something which carried with it the conviction that the doom of Israel was an immediate revelation of God, and which filled the prophet with an irresistible impulse to declare it unto others. An adequate scientific explanation of the source of this message is impossible. It had its roots in those deeps of the human spirit where there is immediate communion with the Spirit of God.

In order to understand the full import of this message of doom it is necessary to fix clearly in mind two important facts that are frequently overlooked. The first is the religious significance of the nation to the ancient Israelite. With us the individual is the unit of value in religion.

Our country, however much we may love it, is not necessary to our religious life. Banishment from it, no matter how much we might regret it, would not necessarily affect our deepest religious interests. Our relation to God would still be the same, and we would still have the same hope of salvation and eternal life. Not so, however, the ancient Hebrew. With him the nation overshadowed the individual. It was through the nation, through the sanctuaries in the land of Israel, that the individual entered into fellowship with Jehovah. Only in Canaan, therefore, could he lead a life of full communion with God. Every other land was to him an unclean land (7. 17). To live in Assyria was to be compelled to eat unclean food (Hos. 9. 3f.). Life in that land had for him no sanctity. It was cut off from Jehovah. National exile, therefore, to him was a far more serious matter than it would be to us to-day. It was in a sense the sum of all evils. It meant the blotting out of all his highest hopes; it meant the annihilation of all that had given sacredness to life.

But even more important than this popular religious nationalism is the further fact that the idea of doom in Amos and the prophets generally is larger than that of any particular calamity. The captivity of Israel was only a part of a more general catastrophe. Back of all the threaten-

ings of the prophets lay the idea of a great world-judgment. This idea did not originate, as is frequently asserted, with the prophet Zephaniah. It formed the background of all the literary prophets, and was current in Israel before their time. The people of Israel had the idea that there would be a great day of the Lord, in which Jehovah would assert his supremacy over all the nations of the world. In the ruin and tumult of this great day they themselves expected to be saved. It was to be unto them a day of light and not of darkness (5. 18). Evil would befall the other peoples, but it would not overtake them (9. 10; 6. 3; Isa. 28. 15). Such was apparently the common view when Amos appeared upon the scene. He accepted the idea of such a general day of doom, and began by applying it to the neighboring nations (1. 3 to 2. 3), but then suddenly turned and declared that it would fall with special severity upon Israel herself (2. 6-16). She would be rescued, he ironically said, "as the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion two legs or a piece of an ear" (3. 12). In other words, she was doomed to practically complete destruction.

Her doom, however, was not an isolated one. Nor did it consist simply in the sufferings of war and captivity. In intension as well as extension the prophetic idea of doom was more significant

than has commonly been supposed. Destructive war was to come, but it was not the only form under which the approaching catastrophe was conceived, nor was it the end of the whole matter. Even after the Israelites have been carried into captivity, the sword of Jehovah, we are told, will pursue them and slay them (9. 4). From this it is evident that the question with which Amos was dealing was not simply one of the weal or woe of the nation. His problem was a higher one—it was one of life and death (5. 4-6, 14, 15). These terms are not defined for us. But they must be regarded as eschatological, as terms resonant with the note of finality and eternity. Only as we realize this, only as we put back of the prophetic utterances the belief in the speedy and final coming of Jehovah, can we fully appreciate the significance of these utterances and the passion which was put into them. The prophets were not dealing with a merely temporary political question, that of the existence of Israel. To them the doom or redemption of Israel was only a part of a great and ultimate manifestation of Jehovah, which had all the significance for them that individual destiny has for us. Hence the problem with which Amos and the other prophets were dealing was at bottom the same as that with which religion is grappling today and has been grappling through all the ages

of human history—the problem of life and death, the problem of salvation.

Bearing this in mind, we turn now to the book of Amos. It is unusually simple and orderly in its arrangement. Apart from the concluding section (9. 8-15) it is made up of three main divisions. In the first two chapters we have eight oracles of judgment; in chapters three to six there are a number of sermons of judgment; and in chapters seven to nine we have five visions of judgment. Each of the main divisions of the book thus has judgment as its theme. Oracles, sermons, and visions all center about this idea. And so the motto placed at the beginning (1. 2) is true to the character of the book as a whole with the exception of the concluding verses.

> Jehovah will roar from Zion,
> And utter his voice from Jerusalem;
> And the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn,
> And the top of Carmel shall wither.

Some reject this verse as a later addition to the text, but the paradoxical form in which it is cast is so characteristic of Amos (3. 2; 4. 4; 9. 7) that it carries within itself the stamp of its own genuineness. The voice of Jehovah in the roar of the thunder would naturally suggest a refreshing rain, but here it is followed by a withering

drought, which symbolizes the approaching desolation of the land.

This desolation is conceived of as due to various causes, but the one most frequently referred to is war. Some foreign foe will invade the land whom the Israelitic soldiery will be powerless to withstand. The war will therefore be extraordinarily destructive of life. The city that goes forth a thousand will have but a hundred left, and the one that goes forth a hundred will have only ten left (5. 3). Nine tenths of Israel's warriors will thus be slain. But not only will men fall in battle—the war will also be accompanied by famine. The fair virgins and the young men will faint from thirst (8. 13). And not only will there be a famine of bread and a thirst for water, but also of hearing the words of Jehovah. Men "shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of Jehovah, and shall not find it" (8. 11, 12). The parching of the soul will thus be added to the starvation of the body. In addition to this, there will be a pestilence, a scourge that frequently in the East follows in the wake of war. One especially vivid scene from this threatened plague is preserved for us. The verses in which it is described (6. 9, 10) are somewhat obscure, but the meaning is probably this: There are ten men

in a house. All have died but one, and he has withdrawn to the innermost part of the house, thinking thus to hide himself from the divine anger. A relative coming to bury the dead discovers that there is still one alive. Calling to him in his inner room, he asks if there is any one else alive with him. He replies "No," and then, as he is about to add some formula containing the divine name, the relative interrupts him, saying: "Hush! It is not permitted to make mention of the name of Jehovah." So terrible, the prophet here means to say, will be the gloom that will fall upon the people, and so great their superstitious fear that they will not dare even to mention the name of their God, lest it rouse him to new anger against them. Thus will they be afflicted from one end of the land to the other. "The dead bodies," therefore, "shall be many; in every place shall they cast them forth with silence" (8. 3).

In the midst of such carnage, famine, and pestilence, the whole state is to go down into ruin. No part of it will escape, and no class will be exempt. The city of Samaria, with all that is therein, will be delivered up (6. 8), and the people will be afflicted from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of the Arabah (6. 14). The judgment will fall with special severity upon the luxurious nobles, but the suffering poor will

not escape. "Woe," says the prophet, "to them that are at ease in Zion, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria, the notable men," the rich, those who are content with present conditions and who therefore put off the evil day (6. 1-3). But woe, also, he says, to those who long for the day of Jehovah, the oppressed poor, who see in the expected miraculous intervention of Jehovah the hope of better things for themselves (5. 18). In this hope they will be disappointed. The day of Jehovah will be to them darkness and not light. In that day the winter-house and the summer-house, the houses of ivory and the great houses, will perish (3. 15), and so also the little house (6. 11). And, finally, the sanctuaries themselves, the last refuge of the nation, will be destroyed; and the broken capitals and beams will be used to break the heads of the few who seek to escape (9. 1). So complete and so terrible will the catastrophe be that even nature cannot remain unmoved at the sight. Both earthquake and eclipse will attend it. The land "shall rise up wholly like the River; and it shall be troubled and sink again like the River of Egypt." And the sun will go down at noon, and the earth be darkened in the clear day (8. 9, 10).

Of the certainty of this impending ruin the prophet has no doubt. Before his vision the

snare is already springing up to catch its victim; the lion with his roar is already leaping upon his prey (3. 4, 5). No escape is possible. The evil eye of Jehovah—the magical evil eye of the East—is upon his people (9. 8). His gaze they cannot elude.

Though they dig into Sheol,
Thence shall my hand take them;
And though they climb up to heaven,
Thence will I bring them down.
And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel,
I will search and take them out thence;
And though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea,
Thence will I command the serpent, and it shall bite them.
And though they go into captivity before their enemies,
Thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them (9. 2-4).

So certain, indeed, to the prophet's mind is this impending destruction that he regards it as already accomplished; and adopting the peculiar elegiac metre of his day, sings a funeral song over Israel.

The virgin of Israel is fallen;
She shall no more rise:
She is cast down upon her land;
There is none to raise her up (5. 2).

But prominent as the idea of judgment is in his book, Amos was not simply a prophet of

doom. He did not merely predict the destruction of his own people. Had he done only this, we should have had no more than a psychological interest in him, such an interest as we have in other predicters of evil who have appeared shortly before some great catastrophe. For instance, four or five months before the earthquake that destroyed Messina, during the hottest days of the summer, there appeared in the streets of that city one of those wandering religious fanatics whom the Italians call "Nazarenes." Stopping at the busiest corners and gaining the attention of passers-by by the ringing of a bell, he addressed them in these words: "Be warned, take heed and repent, ye men of Messina! This year shall not end before your city is utterly destroyed." A few days before the end of the year this prediction was remarkably fulfilled. The question then naturally arises as to whether this fulfillment was simply a coincidence or whether the "Nazarene" had a real presentiment of the impending disaster. But, however interesting this question may be from the psychological point of view, it has no further significance—regardless of the answer that may be given to it. And so it would be with the words of Amos, had he been merely a predicter of doom. No religious importance would attach to them.

What makes Amos a significant figure in the history of religion is the great religious conceptions underlying his message of doom. In order to understand these conceptions it will be well to contrast them with the popular beliefs of his day. The people about him felt certain of the divine favor for two reasons: First, they were the chosen of Jehovah. He had brought them up out of Egypt and so would certainly continue to care for them. Secondly, they were attentive to all the details of his worship. They visited the sanctuaries, they kept the feasts, they offered the sacrifices with scrupulous care. What more, they thought, could any God require? Fidelity, then, to religious rites and the enjoyment of a unique relation to Jehovah were the two grounds on which they expected exemption from punishment on the approaching day of doom.

To Amos, however, these two pillars of popular confidence were broken reeds. Neither offered the slightest basis for any assurance of the divine favor. Indeed, to him they were the arch-heresies of his time. "You only," he represents Jehovah as saying, "have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will" not protect you, but "visit upon you all your iniquities" (3. 2). It was true that Jehovah had chosen them to be his peculiar people. He stood

in an especially close relation to them. But this did not mean, as they supposed, that they had a monopoly of the divine favor. It did not mean that they would certainly escape when the day of judgment came. It simply meant moral opportunity. Jehovah had given them the opportunity to be a better people than any other. He had made revelations of his character to them such as he had made to no other nation. This added light, however, instead of lessening their responsibility, only increased it, and made it all the more certain that they would be called to a strict account for their misdoings. In Jehovah's government of the world there was absolute and impartial justice. No favoritism, therefore, would be shown Israel. "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith Jehovah. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?" (9. 7.) Appeal had evidently been frequently made in the day of Amos to the deliverance from Egypt as evidence that Jehovah had treated and would continue to treat Israel with special consideration. But the prophet here declares that this appeal was mistaken. Jehovah's protecting care was not confined to Israel. It was universal. It had brought the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir;

nothing, then, in Israel's outward history afforded her any ground for presuming upon the divine clemency. Whatever preeminence she possessed was to be found in the special revelation which Jehovah had made to her of his character and will. This revelation, however, she had spurned. She, therefore, had no advantage over other nations. She meant no more to Jehovah than the distant and despised Ethiopians.

Such was the manner in which Amos dealt with the national pretension of his day. With the popular trust in rites and ceremonies he was even harsher still. "Come," he says, "to Bethel, and"—not "offer sacrifices," as we would expect, but—"transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression" (4. 4). By this paradoxical and ironical invitation Amos means to say that the sacrifices which the Israelites offered at their sanctuaries, instead of winning the divine favor, were really equivalent to transgressions, calling forth the divine wrath. To many in Israel, such a thought as this must have seemed well-nigh blasphemous. Pilgrimages, sacrifices, and tithes were the forms in which piety for centuries had expressed itself. They must, then, be acceptable to Jehovah. There could be nothing wrong in them. So no doubt the popular mind reasoned. And it is a mistake to suppose that Amos meant to condemn all rites and ceremonies as such. He

was not such a doctrinaire as to be blind to the fact that true piety needs its days and seasons and outward forms for its proper cultivation. What he objected to and denounced was the substitution of these external rites for the inner spirit of piety. In and of themselves the rites were innocent enough and might be an actual aid to true religion, but as a substitute for righteousness they were an abomination in the sight of God. And so Jehovah says:

I hate, I despise your feasts,
And I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Your meal-offerings I will not accept;
Neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.
Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs;
For I will not hear the melody of thy viols.
But let justice roll down as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty stream (5. 21-24).

This is one of the great passages in the prophetic literature. In it we have expressed for the first time, so far as we know, with perfect clearness and finality the absolute worthlessness of all mere ceremonialism and the supreme value, in the religious life, of righteousness. Henceforth, in religion, the one essential thing will be the right attitude of mind and heart. The only worship hereafter that will be acceptable to Jehovah will be worship in spirit and in truth.

And so, as against the popular trust in sacrifices, and as against the popular belief in the election of Israel and the common assurance that Jehovah would in some marvelous way intervene on their behalf in the day of trouble, Amos laid down the principle that the only hope of Israel was to be found in righteousness. And by righteousness he meant what was right in the absolute sense of the term, both objective and subjective; he meant that which forms the essence of all true morality—respect for personality in oneself and in others. It was because the Israelites lacked this, because they were sinful, that doom was about to come upon them. The approaching catastrophe was not due to political necessity nor to blind chance, it was a penalty inflicted upon them because of their sin (3. 3-6). Accordingly, only a removal of their sin could save them.

Sin with them manifested itself in various forms, but there were two specific evils which Amos especially condemned. First, the rich oppressed the poor. They took exactions from them of wheat (5. 11), they used false measures in buying and selling (8. 5), and fairly crushed their head to the earth (2. 7). Secondly, the judges, to whom the poor appealed for relief, were corrupt. They accepted bribes (5. 12), and so were controlled by the rich. In this way human life was literally bartered away. The inno-

cent were sold for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes (2. 6; 8. 6). It was not, however, the smallness of the amount for which the poor were sold that stirred the indignation of the prophet, but the fact that they were sold at all. All money in his estimate was base when compared with the value of human life. There were certain common rights of humanity that were above all price, and these rights the ruling classes in Israel were persistently disregarding. To Amos this seemed the height of iniquity, and not only the height of iniquity but the very limit of governmental folly.

> Do horses run upon the rock?
> Do men plow the sea with oxen?
> That ye have turned justice into gall,
> And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood? (6. 12).

One might, he says, as well try to plow the sea with oxen as to try to maintain a stable national life in the midst of such a perversion of justice.

Thus the very nature of human government, as well as the principle of divine retribution, made it certain that the civic injustice rampant in Israel would result fatally to the nation. The only way that it could be avoided was by a complete change of conduct, by putting humanity in the place of inhumanity, and justice in the place of injustice. So Amos exhorts them, saying:

"Seek Jehovah, and ye shall live," and "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live" (5. 6, 14). These two exhortations are synonymous, and express more clearly than any other utterances in the book the most significant element in the prophet's teaching. He identifies religion absolutely with the moral law. To seek Jehovah is to seek the good. There is no other way of entering into fellowship with him. This, as we have already seen, was a conception of epoch-making significance. When religion busies itself with rites and ceremonies, with signs and omens, it is of very slight value to the world. Indeed, it usually acts as a bar to progress. It is guided by no rational principle, and so tends to sanctify the inconsistent, absurd, and often harmful usages and beliefs of the past. But when religion is identified with the moral nature, all this is changed. Religion then comes to be the chief conserving force in society and a most powerful stimulus to the development of man's highest faculties. Conscience, from this point of view, is the one way of approach to God, and those ethical principles which lie at the basis of every healthy and progressive society are the special objects of religious concern. It was, consequently, a matter of the utmost importance in the history of religion when Amos laid down the law that the one way to seek Jehovah is to seek the

good and not the evil. This truth was not original with Amos. To some degree it had been apprehended centuries before his time. But he, so far as we know, was the first to differentiate it from the popular religion, and to make it the one fundamental principle of all true religion. He thus stands out in history as the great prophet of moral law.

Our study, however, of the teaching of Amos is not yet complete. At the close of the book there are four brief words of hope (9. 8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15). These words are commonly supposed to have been added by a later hand. They are inconsistent, it is claimed, with the preceding message of doom. For Amos to have followed up his bitter denunciations of Israel with such promises of restoration and plenty as we here find would have been to break the point off all that he had previously said. It would have been to "sink back lamely into the delusion against which he himself had fought." "Shall the illusion triumph over its destroyer, the God of one's wishes over the God of historical necessity?" asks Wellhausen. No one surely could believe this of Amos. Moreover, it is urged that if he had entertained any hopes of future glory for Israel, he would certainly have insisted upon moral regeneration as the necessary condition of

its attainment in a way that is not done in 9. 11-15.

But against this confident rejection of the concluding section of the book of Amos there has in recent years been a reaction. Many distinguished scholars have come out in favor of its authenticity. One reason for this change is the growing conviction that we know so little about the composition of the prophetic books and the conditions of thought at the time they were written, that we need more convincing reasons than are frequently given before any particular passage is denied to its traditional author. Want of connection with what precedes or follows is no necessary indication that a verse or passage is a later addition. The prophetic oracles were frequently grouped together in a purely mechanical way according to the principle of catchwords. It is then a mistake to expect in them a sustained continuity of thought. Furthermore, it is quite possible that ideas that seem mutually inconsistent to us did not seem such to the prophets themselves. Many of the ideas which at present live peacefully together within us are really formally or logically inconsistent with each other, only we are not aware of it. Future ages, however, will be. In the second place, we now have evidence that it was customary not only among the Israelitic but also the Egyptian seers to combine to-

gether prophecies of doom and hope. One seemed to imply the other, as fear and hope rise alternately in the human breast. What the origin of the belief in a glorious future was we do not know. But we know that it was current in Israel before the time of Amos. It is *a priori* probable, therefore, that it, as well as the belief in a day of doom, had its place in his book.

In addition to these considerations is the further fact that the preexilic prophets were not merely preachers of repentance; they had also the function of encouraging faith. They had their own disciples and fellow believers whom they needed to cheer. Then, too, even such an apparently relentless prophet of doom as Amos had a more tender side to his nature. When the nation was at first threatened with destruction he interceded for them not once but twice, saying, "O Lord Jehovah, forgive, I beseech thee: how shall Jacob stand? for he is small" (7. 2, 5). And when calamity after calamity befell them without accomplishing its purpose, he voiced with infinite tenderness the heartache of God as he repeated over and over again the refrain, "Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith Jehovah" (4. 6-11). There are, it is true, some passages in which the doom of Israel is apparently announced as absolutely final and unavoidable (7. 7-9; 8. 1-3; 9. 1-4). But over against these are

to be placed those exhortations in which the prophet bids his hearers seek Jehovah that they may live (5. 4-6, 14, 15). Evidently, then, in spite of all his dark forecasts, Amos was not altogether without hope that Israel might be saved, and certainly was not without the conviction that some at least would "live." To picture him as a kind of ethical fatalist who only passively mirrored the approaching judgment, as does the most elaborate recent commentary on his book, and to say that "he was indifferent to everything that had to do with purpose and motive," is utterly to misrepresent his true character. He was a man of intense passion, who saw purpose everywhere. The teleological element, instead of being absent from his book, permeates the whole of it. That such a man as he should not have reflected on what would take place after the destruction of Israel, is incredible. The truth, rather, is that, like the other prophets, he had a very definite conviction with reference to the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God, and that it was this conviction that made him bold enough to announce with such fidelity his message of doom. The destruction of Israel was never the last word of any prophet. Beyond the ruin would rise the new building of God. Israel would be sifted as grain is sifted in a sieve, but not the least kernel would fall to the earth (9.

9). Such was the common faith of the prophets. And such is the faith that is expressed in the closing verses of the book of Amos. There was to be a glorious future for the people of God; but Israel must first be purged; Gethsemane and Calvary must precede the resurrection.

But while Amos thus had his hopeful outlook into the future, this was a subordinate element in his teaching. His primary task was to assert the claims of the moral law as over against the unspiritual formalism and the national pretension of his time. His message was therefore necessarily one largely of doom. His chief significance, however, does not lie in this message of doom, but in the thoroughness with which he moralized the conception of religion. He recognized no sacramental mysteries as of any value apart from moral obedience, and he allowed no place for caste or exclusiveness or special privilege in religion. There were from his point of view no private wires and no subway connections in the spiritual realm. The religious life was something to be lived out in the open, in the sight and within the reach of all. He thus stood for the enthronement of conscience in religion. This was his great achievement. To seek the good is to seek Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah is to seek the good.

CHAPTER III

HOSEA THE PROPHET OF LOVE

A CERTAIN amount of interest has always attached to Hosea because of the remarkable story of his marriage. But it is only comparatively recently that his real importance has come to be appreciated. He, like Amos, has been "discovered" by the modern critic.

The trouble with the older study of the prophets was that it was projected against a false background. It assumed that the Law had already been given in its totality, and that the function of the prophets was simply to enforce its teaching. No originality, therefore, was possible to them. It was their task merely to impress upon the people of their own day, and to apply to their own times, truths handed down from the past. To be sure, they did this with great skill and power. But such an achievement did not entitle them to rank with the creative geniuses of the race. It simply made them effective preachers or gifted poets. It did not single them out as pioneers in any great movement of the human spirit, as leaders of thought

who have left their impress upon all succeeding generations.

Hence, before the true significance of the prophets could be appreciated, it was necessary that the traditional view with reference to the origin of the Law be modified. And this, as is well known, has been done during the past century. It is now seen that the Law was a gradual development, and that considerable portions of it date from a later period than that of the first group of literary prophets. These men, consequently, did not have back of them the clearly defined and exalted monotheism of the Law books, but a far less definite body of religious beliefs and practices. What they did, therefore, was not merely to reproduce the teaching of the past; their work marked an important step forward. They took the earlier ideas, crystallized them into fixed principles, reduced them to a consistent system of belief, and thus made them the basis of the mightiest spiritual movement of the centuries.

Only as we realize this fact can we properly appreciate the true importance of the prophets, especially the earliest of them, Amos and Hosea. The messages delivered by these men were relatively brief, and had they come after the completion of the Law would not have been especially significant. What gives to them their

extraordinary importance is their originality. The book of Amos, as we have seen, was the earliest in which religion is identified absolutely with the moral law. Amos, therefore, may be regarded as standing at the head of all those who through the ages have sought to free religion from its unnatural alliance with superstition, ceremonialism, selfishness, and tyranny, and who have endeavored to identify it with the never-ceasing struggle of the human mind for righteousness, truth, freedom, and social progress. And so likewise with Hosea. His was the earliest book in which religion is interpreted absolutely in the terms of love. He, therefore, in a certain sense stands at the head of all those to whom religion has been the great solace of life, to whom it has meant redemption from sin and triumph over the world. "There is no truth," says George Adam Smith, "uttered by later prophets about the divine grace, which we do not find in germ in him. . . . He is the first prophet of grace, Israel's first evangelist." And Cornill goes still farther, saying, "When we consider that all this was absolutely new, that those thoughts in which humanity has been educated and which have consoled it for nearly three thousand years, were first spoken by Hosea, we must reckon him among the greatest religious geniuses which the world has ever produced." In this

latter statement, as in the same author's estimate of Amos, there is a considerable element of exaggeration. Hosea's doctrine of the divine love was not "absolutely new." But it was, nevertheless, expressed with a clearness and finality unknown before his time. And this fact entitles him to much of the praise here given him. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest of the prophets. Along with Amos and Isaiah he laid the foundations of literary prophecy, and so must be regarded as one of the most important agents through whom God made his special revelation of himself to Israel.

The life of Hosea, like that of Amos, is for the most part wrapped in obscurity. Our only source of information concerning it is his book; and from it there is very little that can be extracted with certainty. The superscription puts Hosea's ministry in the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel, and in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. The names of these Judaean kings were probably added by some later scribe; but the addition is trustworthy in so far as it implies that Hosea's ministry continued beyond the reign of Jeroboam. Jeroboam died about B. C. 740, after a long and prosperous reign. He was succeeded by his son Zechariah, who after a brief reign of six months was assassinated by Shallum. Shal-

lum ascended the throne, and after ruling for a month was himself put to death by Menahem. Menahem ruled for two or three years and was then followed by his son, Pekahiah, who after a reign of two years was assassinated by Pekah. Pekah ruled for a year or two, and then was slain by Hoshea, who ascended the throne as an Assyrian vassal and was the last of the kings of Israel. There were thus within eight or nine years, from B. C. 740 to about 732, no less than seven different kings of Israel, and of these four were assassinated by their successors.

The period then following the death of Jeroboam II was one of anarchy. The kingdom was on the road to ruin. This state of affairs is clearly reflected in the last eleven chapters of the book of Hosea. Here we read again and again of the setting up of kings and of their overthrow (7. 3-7; 8. 4; 10. 7, 15; 13. 10f.). But how far into this period of confusion and anarchy Hosea's ministry extended we do not know. The fact that his book contains no reference to the Syro-Ephraimitic war (B. C. 734-733) and no allusion to the immediately following invasion of Gilead and Galilee by the Assyrians, suggests that his work was by that time done. We may, therefore, since chapters one to three manifestly preceded the death of Jeroboam (1. 4), put Hosea's date at about B. C. 743 to 733. He was

thus a younger contemporary of Amos. Whether he ever saw or heard the Judean prophet we do not know. There are two verses in his book (4. 15; 8. 14) that seem to imply an acquaintance with the prophecy of Amos, but their authenticity is open to question.

Hosea's home was in the northern kingdom. This is clear from the fact that he speaks of the king of Israel as "our king" (7. 5), and from the further fact that all the places he mentions by name are found in the northern realm, as for example Gilead, Gibeah, Gilgal, Jezreel, Ramah, Shechem, Bethel, and Samaria. Another reason often adduced in support of this view is that Hosea is more sympathetic in his attitude toward Israel than Amos. "In every sentence," says Ewald, "it appears that Hosea had not only visited the kingdom of Ephraim, as Amos had done, but that he is acquainted with it from the depths of his heart, and follows all its doings, aims, and fortunes with the profound feelings gendered of such sympathy as is conceivable in the case of a native prophet only." And says Elmslie: "The words of Amos sound like a voice from outside, pealing with the thunder of God's anger and righteous indignation against wrongs and injuries that Amos does not feel himself bound up with. The characteristic of Hosea's book is that the burden of Israel's guilt lies

weighty on his soul; he wails, and mourns, and laments, and repents with that sinful people."

But this admitted difference between the two prophets need not necessarily be due to the fact that one was a native of Israel and the other not. It may be due quite as much to their difference of temperament. Amos was a stern man, a man of clear thought and firm will, who stood to some degree apart from the common life of men. Hosea, on the other hand, was a man of deeply emotional nature, rich in his affections, a man who by instinct entered sympathetically into the lives of others. Had he, like Amos, been a native of Judah, his message would in all probability have been the same in spirit that it now is. For no such gulf separated the two kingdoms as is sometimes supposed. Conditions in Judah were not essentially different from those in Israel. The things that united the two realms were far deeper and more significant than those that divided them. There is no indication that Amos felt any special strangeness when at Bethel, or that he looked upon the northern kingdom with any particular coldness. The two peoples were for him practically one (3. 1). The same is also true of Hosea, who refers not infrequently to Judah (5. 5, 10; 6. 4; 10. 11). The more sympathetic tone of his prophecies, therefore, can hardly be ascribed to his place of residence. It

is due, rather, to his temperament. But the other grounds above mentioned for believing that his home was in Israel are decisive. And it is a matter of interest to know that he is the only canonical prophet of whom this is true. Shortly after his time Samaria fell (B. C. 721). He consequently had no successors in Israel such as Amos had in Judah.

Concerning the details of Hosea's life, we have very little, if any, information. The question has been raised as to whether his home was in the country or the city, and it has been argued that the numerous illustrations which he draws from nature, from the wild beasts, and from agricultural life favor the former. It has also been asserted that he surely lived near a public bakery, "for he delights to draw illustrations from the fiery oven." But these are idle fancies, as worthless as they are baseless. With greater probability it has been conjectured that he was a priest. He has, for instance, an unusually high conception of the duty of the priesthood in the matter of popular education. He looks upon the priests as in a large measure responsible for the morals of the people. It is "like people, like priest" (4. 9). "My people," says Jehovah, "are destroyed for lack of knowledge"; and then, turning to the priestly class, he adds, "Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee,

that thou shalt be no priest to me" (4. 6). The priests instead of properly instructing the people were leading them astray. "They feed on the sin of my people, and set their heart on their iniquity" (4. 8). But not only does Hosea show unusual insight into the responsibility of the priesthood; he also reveals a rich knowledge of the past history of his people, such as one would naturally expect of a priest (9. 10; 10. 9; 11. 1; 12. 3; 13. 1). Then, too, he is acquainted with a written Law, in which it was apparently the special function of the priest to give instruction (4. 6; 8. 1, 12). Still further, it may be noted that he speaks of "the people that doth not understand" (4. 14) in a way that implies that he belonged to those who knew the requirements of the Law. It is therefore not improbable that he belonged to the priesthood, and was forced into the prophetic office by the degeneracy of his order. But of his ministry itself we know nothing, except that he seems to have suffered persecution (9. 7, 8).

The point of special interest in connection with the life of Hosea is the story of his marriage (chapters 1 and 3). So strange is this story that it is still an open question whether it should be interpreted literally or allegorically. In favor of the former, it is urged that if Hosea actually married a faithless wife and then later, after she

had been put away because of her infidelity, restored her to his home, we have in this experience the key to his message of the divine love. "Whence," it is asked, "his conception of the intense and passionate love of Jehovah for his faithless spouse," if it did not come from some such experience as this? But such reasoning is precarious. We need to be on our guard against it. It often misleads people. A good modern illustration is furnished in the case of Ibsen. Shortly after his marriage he wrote a drama entitled Love's Comedy, in which he took a rather pessimistic view of wedded life. The work at once called forth a storm of protest, and it was freely asserted that the views there expressed were the outcome of the poet's own domestic infelicity. As a matter of fact, however, this conclusion was wholly erroneous. Ibsen's home life was far from unhappy. Edmund Gosse says that Mrs. Ibsen must be regarded as one of the few successful wives of geniuses. And Ibsen himself said, in reply to the criticisms passed on the above work, that the only person who really understood the book was his wife The fact is that men of genius do not need, as we of sluggish fancies do, the stimulus of immediate personal experience to direct and inspire their thought. Endowed with the divine gift of imagination, they can project

themselves into the lives of others and think their thoughts without necessarily sharing in their experiences. Reasoning thus, there is nothing in Hosea's conception of the divine love for Israel that requires that he should have passed through such a tragic experience as is recorded in his book. The idea may well have come to him independently of any such experience.

This, however, does not settle the question at issue. The story of Hosea's marriage may still be literal history. In favor of this view it is further argued that there are certain features of the narrative that do not admit of an allegorical interpretation. This is true of the name "Gomer the daughter of Diblaim" (1. 3), and also of the weaning of Lo-ruhamah (1. 8). Another point made is that the analogy furnished by Isaiah, who gave symbolical names to his two sons (7. 3; 8. 3), tends to confirm the actuality of what is here recorded of Hosea. But over against these considerations, it is contended that all the details of an allegory need not have symbolical significance. Some may be inserted simply to fill out the story. And, furthermore, such a name as that of Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, may have been well known in Hosea's day. It may, as Gressmann suggests, have been the name of some semi-legendary character like

Semiramis, or perhaps that of some notorious harlot of the time; in which case the symbolical character of the narrative would have been clear at once to the reader. It is further urged that the command to take "a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom" (1. 2) cannot have been literally given to the prophet, and that the renewed command in chapter 3 to love an adulteress fits in poorly with chapter 1. This, it is added, would not be the case if the narrative were allegorical, for chapter 3 might then be regarded as an independent allegory without any connection with chapter 1. Much can thus be said in favor of a purely symbolical interpretation of these chapters. (Compare Jer. 13, 1-11; 25, 15ff.). But decisive objective evidence either way cannot be found. And so interpreters usually fall back upon their own taste. G. A. Smith, for instance, says that "only the real pain of that experience could have made the man brave enough to use it as a figure of his God's treatment of Israel." Others, on the contrary, like Kuenen, find the literal interpretation "unnatural and offensive."

The one distinct advantage of regarding the story of Hosea's marriage as autobiographical is that it gives to his message a pathos and a realism that it would not otherwise have. It puts back of his words a bleeding heart, and this

gives to them a new power. If, however, we accept this view, which is the one commonly held at present, we must interpret the words "wife of whoredom and children of whoredom" (1. 2) as proleptic. It is inconceivable that Hosea should have deliberately married an impure woman, and still more so that he should have done it under divine command. He must have regarded Gomer as pure when he married her. Only later did he learn of her faithlessness. The shock of this discovery probably led him to banish her from his home. In any case chapter 3 finds her in bondage to another man, from whom Hosea redeems her. This tragic experience, if real, must have caused the prophet untold suffering. Still, it was not an unmixed evil. It brought him a great spiritual blessing. Through it he came to know the heart of God as he had not known it before, and thus was admitted to a new intimacy and richness of fellowship with the Divine. As he, therefore, from the standpoint of this later experience, looked back upon his sufferings, it seemed clear to him that the hand of God had been in them all, and that even his marriage with this impure woman had been commanded of God. He did not, of course, himself realize this at the outset. "On that uncertain voyage he had sailed with sealed orders." Indeed, he did not even know that he was obey-

ing orders. But as he looks back upon his life from a later date, it is all clear to him. All things, he now sees, have been working together for his good, and in them all he has been following the leading of Jehovah. Thus he found for himself the greatest comfort that can come to any man in the face of sorrow and disappointment. Had he been an unbeliever, he would have seen in his unfortunate marriage simply a case of bad luck without any redeeming feature whatsoever. But being a man of faith, he saw in it the gift of God and the call of God.

By this, however, I do not mean that it was Hosea's unfortunate marriage that led him to become a prophet. Not a few scholars take this view. Dr. Batten, for instance, says, "Amos was led to prophesy by reason of divinely given insight; Hosea was directed to the same task by domestic affliction of the sorest kind which can come to an upright soul." But this view has no basis in the text (compare 1. 2), and is, moreover, out of harmony with the common interpretation of Hosea's experiences. When his first child was born he was not aware of his wife's infidelity. Yet the name Jezreel, given this child, was a prophecy, announcing the fall of the northern kingdom. It is also by no means certain that the prophet had come to know his wife's true character at the time of the birth of

the next two children, whose names also were prophetic of Israel's doom. Indeed, the contrary is far more probable. For he could hardly have retained his wife in his home after he had learned of her unfaithfulness. W. Robertson Smith, it is true, says that Hosea knew that the children were not his own, but "concealed the shame of their mother and acknowledged the children as his own, hiding the bitter sorrow in his own heart." To this, however, A. B. Davidson has made the following effective reply: "If he concealed the shame at the time, he certainly took effectual pains to proclaim it to all the world soon afterward." It is then clear that Hosea's call to the prophetic office preceded his tragic domestic experience. What the latter did was simply to give a new content and a new urgency to the call. It led him to understand more fully than before the passionate love of Jehovah, and moved him to devote himself with new energy to his prophetic task. Harriet Beecher Stowe, in speaking of the sorrow that came to her in the death of one of her children, once said, "I felt that I could never be consoled for it, unless this crushing of my own heart might enable me to work out some great good to others." And so it seems to have been with Hosea. His grief and shame impelled him to seek consolation in the more effective service

which he was now qualified to render to his own people.

The book of Hosea, as we have already observed, consists of two parts—chapters 1 to 3 and 4 to 14. The first may be regarded as in the nature of an introduction to the second. In it the prophet states his standpoint, gives us the key to his message as a whole. The key is this: Jehovah's relation to Israel is that of a husband. Israel, however, has gone astray, has proven herself a faithless wife. Jehovah, therefore, as a righteous husband, feels compelled to put her away. But so deep and genuine is his affection that he cannot allow her to be permanently alienated from him. So he redeems her from her bondage, and awaits the time when she will be worthy of full restoration to his favor. In this general conception of Jehovah's relation to Israel we have the essence of the prophet's message. His whole interpretation of Israel's history centers about the idea of the divine love. In expressing this idea he might have used another figure. He might have represented Jehovah as the father rather than the husband of Israel. Indeed, he does so later (11. 1). And this is the figure which will naturally be used as soon as individualism has displaced nationalism. But so long as the nation rather than the

individual is the center of interest the figure of Jehovah as a husband is the more natural one. The important thing, however, is the idea, not the figure. And the idea of the divine love is in these opening chapters of the book not only suggested, it is made the basal element in the prophet's message, the Alpha and Omega of his theology.

In expounding the conception of the divine love, Hosea relates the story of his marriage which we have just considered at some length. One difficulty with the literal interpretation of this story is the fragmentary form in which it appears. Not only is it broken up into two detached parts (chapters 1 and 3), but the connection between the parts is missing. How the wife came into the position in which we find her in chapter 3 is not stated. Hence it is supposed by some scholars that the account of how she was expelled from her home has fallen out of the text. This account was originally the connecting link between 1. 1-9 and chapter 3. The application, then, of the prophet's private experiences to Israel, which we now find in 1. 10 to 2. 23, belonged originally after chapter 3. This is at least its logical position, for the contents of chapter 3 are presupposed in chapter 2. G. A. Smith, however, thinks the present arrangement significant. It "means," he says,

"that while the prophet's private pain preceded his sympathy with God's pain, it was not he who set God but God who set him the example of forgiveness." But, ingenious and beautiful as is this suggestion, it is hardly an adequate explanation of the present arrangement of the text. Indeed, the difficulties connected with the story as it now stands are so numerous and serious that some recent critics have either eliminated it altogether or have so curtailed and modified it as to deprive it of any special signification. It is not then surprising that the allegorical interpretation is again beginning to commend itself to scholars.

The second and main part of the book, chapters 4 to 14, is made up of a number of independent discourses, but there is no sharp line of demarcation between them. One runs into the other in such a way that every analysis of the text is necessarily more or less arbitrary. It is, however, noticeable that from 4. 1 to 7. 7 the prophet deals chiefly with the moral and religious corruption of Israel, while from 7. 8 to 9. 9 he devotes attention more especially to her political weakness. Then in 9. 10 to 13. 16, while the lines of thought in the two preceding sections are continued, we have a number of references to the past history of Israel that give to this part of the book a more or less distinctive

character. And, finally, in chapter 14 we have a closing word of hope.

In reading these chapters we are first impressed with the prominence of the prophet's message of doom. To some degree we had been prepared for this by chapter 1. But chapters 2 and 3 had hardly led us to believe that it would be so conspicuous as it is. Chapters 4 to 13 are almost one continuous denunciation of Israel for her sins. Her impending destruction is announced again and again. Amos does not deal more unsparingly with Israel's sins than does Hosea, nor does he announce her approaching doom more confidently and more unrelentingly. If anything, Hosea is the more bitter, the fiercer of the two. He represents Jehovah as saying that he "hated" the people of Israel. "Because of the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of my house; I will love them no more" (9. 15). "I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off, and there shall be none to deliver" (5. 14). "Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O death, where are thy plagues? O Sheol, where is thy destruction? Repentance shall be hid from my eyes" (13. 14).

The doom thus threatened is variously con-

ceived by Hosea. In some passages it is represented as the outcome of internal decay. "I am," says Jehovah, "unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness" (5. 12; compare 7. 9; 9. 16). In others it is thought of as brought on by war (5. 8f.; 7. 16; 11. 6). The people are to go into captivity, but whether to Egypt or Assyria the prophet apparently did not know. He mentions both lands as places to which they are to be deported (8. 13; 9. 3, 6; 11. 5), and also says that they are to be "wanderers among the nations" (9. 17). This idea of banishment from their native land is prominent in the book, and is the prevailing form under which the impending doom is conceived. But the doom itself was larger than any particular calamity. It was a kind of world-judgment (4. 3). This eschatological conception lay back of Hosea's as well as Amos's teaching. Only as we bear this in mind can we fully appreciate their message of doom. The destruction of Israel, from their point of view, was not merely a matter of political or national importance. It was an event charged with the profoundest religious significance. The whole question of final doom and salvation was involved in it. It meant as much to the ancient Israelite as individual destiny means to us to-day.

Another point to be borne in mind in estimat-

ing the prophetic message of doom is this: the sense of danger is intimately and profoundly related to the awakening of the religious consciousness. The particular form under which the chief danger of life presents itself to the human mind naturally varies from age to age. But the feeling that there is in life something supremely important at stake underlies all profound and intense religious conviction. And the more vividly the real danger of life is conceived, and the more imminent it is thought to be, the more immediate and the more genuine will be the religious response. A religion which makes no appeal to the sense of danger has no edge to it. It has no power to grip the basal impulses of life. It is simply a meaningless sentiment, a worthless survival of some vital religious movement of the past. In then laying such tremendous stress on the impending doom of Israel, Hosea and the other prophets of his day were not simply adapting themselves to the actual historical conditions of their own time; they were appealing to a permanent element in human nature, an element that underlies the vital and vigorous religious life of every age.

The grounds on which Hosea bases his message of doom differ somewhat from those found in the book of Amos. Amos lays special stress on the social injustice of his day, devoting but

little attention to the corrupt worship and other evils. Hosea, on the other hand, makes the religious corruption of his time, including the idolatry, particularly prominent, laying less stress on the distinctively ethical side of the people's life. Then, in addition, he denounces, as Amos does not, the foreign alliances and the monarchy itself. His teaching at this point is therefore more complex than that of Amos. In order to understand it better it will be well to consider its different elements separately.

Hosea refers occasionally to the oppression of the poor. He denounces those that "remove the landmark" (5. 10), and those also who oppress by means of "balances of deceit" (12. 7). Of Ephraim, who boasts that he has become rich, he says, "All his gains will not suffice for the iniquity which he has committed" (12. 8; emended reading). But this special evil is not prominent in his prophecies. What we find in them is a general relaxing of the moral bonds. Robbery and murder seem to have been common (4. 2; 6. 9; 7. 1). Fornication was also rife. The prophet refers to it again and again, and makes some significant observations concerning it (4. 2, 10, 11-14; 6. 10; 7. 4; 9. 10). "I am unaware," says G. A. Smith, "of any earlier moralist in any literature who traced the effects of national licentiousness in a diminishing popu-

lation, or who exposed the persistent delusion of libertine men that they themselves may resort to vice and yet keep their womankind chaste. Hosea, so far as we know, was the first to do this." (See Hos. 9. 11, 16; 4. 14). There was then a general corruption of society. All classes were involved in it. The priests and nobles, it is true, are singled out for special castigation, but they are condemned not so much because they have wronged the poor as because they have led the people astray. The whole nation was guilty. "There is," says the prophet, "no truth, nor goodness, nor knowledge of God in the land. There is nought but swearing and breaking of faith, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery" (4. 1, 2).

The evil, however, which Hosea condemns most persistently and most severely is the corrupt worship. This lay at the root of much of the moral corruption. The current licentiousness, for instance, was in large part to be traced to the sanctuaries. The altars on the high hills were breeding places of iniquity (4. 13). At them prostitution was regularly practiced. No wonder that Hosea so severely denounced the cult of his day! But it was not only because of its immoral accompaniments that Hosea condemned it. It was in and of itself a wrong way of seeking God. "I desire," says Jehovah,

"goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, not burnt offerings" (6. 6). "They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek Jehovah; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them" (5. 6; compare 8. 11f.). The one way to find God is through the right attitude of mind, through faithfulness and goodness. This was also, as we have seen, the teaching of Amos. Both prophets looked upon the current ceremonialism as religiously worthless, and even harmful.

But Hosea went beyond Amos and declared that the Israelitic worship of his day was nothing short of a worship of Baal. The people themselves, to be sure, thought they were worshiping Jehovah (5. 6; 8. 13; 9. 4), but they did not "know" him (5. 4). Both in spirit and content their worship was largely an importation from the Canaanites. This was true of the immorality associated with it. So prominent a feature of the Canaanitic religion was prostitution, that the prophets came to speak of all idolatry as a going "whoring" after other gods. It was also true of the use of images. They had no place in the original Mosaic institution. But gradually through Canaanitic influence they were introduced into Israel. On the part of the more spiritual element in the nation there was always a feeling of aversion toward them, but this feel-

ing did not apparently come to a head until the time of Hosea. He, so far as we know, was the first publicly to attack and ridicule their use. The golden idol set up by Jeroboam I he calls "calves" (10. 5; 8. 5, 6). And with utmost scorn he refers to men, that sacrifice, kissing calves (13. 2). All images, he says, are man-made (8. 4; 14. 3). They are, therefore, utterly unworthy to represent Jehovah. Indeed, they did not represent him. They were simply Baals, false gods (11. 2). This aspect of Hosea's teaching, which was continued by Isaiah and reached its height in Deutero-Isaiah, formed a very important factor in the development of Old Testament religion.

But not only were there certain features or accompaniments of the current cult which had been introduced from without; the whole spirit of Israelitic worship had become heathenish. The people had forgotten the true ethical character of Jehovah. They would howl to him on their beds, but with their hearts they did not cry unto him (7. 14). They would gather themselves for grain and new wine, but in their spirit would rebel against him. Hosea, therefore, sees in the cult of his day simply a worship of Baal. Israel has played the harlot. She has said, "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil

and my drink" (2. 5). Of her vines and her fig trees also she has said, "These are my hire that my lovers have given me" (2. 12). The soil, the fruitful soil, as Wellhausen says, was the object of her religion; it took the place alike of heaven and hell. No wonder, then, that Jehovah declares to her that he will deprive her of all the fruits of the soil, and will hedge up her way until eventually she is forced to say, "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now" (2. 7.). This language at first sounds strange to us (compare 2. 2-13). But the underlying thought is perfectly familiar. What we have here is simply the age-old conflict between the sensuous and the spiritual. The current Baalish cult was a pure nature-religion. It was sensuous and sensual. The religion of Jehovah, on the other hand, was sternly ethical. And in the long run, says the prophet, this higher form of religion is certain to prevail. The hard experiences of life, its losses and disappointments, the ultimately unsatisfying character of the sense-life, the grim fact of death—all of these are on its side. They are continually summoning us to the higher life of the Spirit. In view of these things, it would seem that eventually Israel and all men would surely turn from Baal to Jehovah, from a god of the flesh to the God of character.

From what has been said concerning the Israelitic cult of his time, it is evident why Hosea so completely repudiated it. But it is not quite so clear why he denounced all foreign alliances. With us such alliances would be simply matters of political prudence. This, however, was not the standpoint from which Hosea viewed them. He regarded, it is true, the policy of Israel's leaders as foolish. "Ephraim," he says, "is like a silly dove, without understanding: they call unto Egypt, they go to Assyria" (7. 11). In spite of the gifts which they bear with them, they will by their diplomatic efforts secure no real aid (10. 6; 12. 1). The great Assyrian king, he says, "is not able to heal you; neither will he cure you of your wound" (5. 13). Instead of this, they will themselves be carried into captivity by the very powers whose help they seek (8. 13; 9. 3; 11. 5). Nevertheless, it was not because these alliances were unwise from the political point of view that Hosea condemned them. The reason for his opposition to them was deeper than this. He saw in them an evidence of disloyalty to Jehovah (7. 15). But exactly in what this disloyalty consisted is not perfectly clear. Some find it in the fact that in ancient times every treaty with another nation involved to a certain extent a recognition of the god or gods of that nation.

Hence such a treaty on Israel's part was inconsistent with the sole Godhead of Jehovah and implied a measure of distrust in him. Others explain it on the ground that the alliance of a small kingdom like Israel with a great empire like Assyria or Egypt would necessarily mean the introduction into Israel of Assyrian or Egyptian customs, rites, and beliefs that were out of harmony with the law of Jehovah. But neither of these explanations is adequate, as may be seen from the fact that when Israel or Judah had once entered into an alliance with another nation, the prophets advocated fidelity to it. Some other factor must have entered into their attitude toward foreign alliances. And this is to be found in their conception of Israel's unique mission in the world. This mission was religious, not political. Hosea's "ideal," as Davidson says, "was already that of the Church of God." Political intriguing was therefore out of harmony with Israel's true mission. It tended to secularize the people, to make of them a nation like the other nations of the world, and so was equivalent to hiring lovers and speaking lies against Jehovah (8. 9; 7. 13).

It is from this point of view, also, that we are to understand Hosea's antipathy to the monarchy. The kings of his day were weak. They had no power to hold firmly and securely the

reins of government. They were tossed hither and thither like chips upon the water (10. 7). "Where now is thy king," asks the prophet, "that he may save thee?" (13. 10.) And the people in their helplessness cry out, "The king, what can he do for us?" (10. 3). But weak and worthless as these kings were, it was not merely on this account that Hosea condemned them. His antipathy had a deeper basis. They and their predecessors had represented a policy hostile to that of the prophets. They had encouraged idolatry (1 Kings 12. 28). They had been the leaders in foreign alliances (2 Kings 15. 19). They had many of them ascended the throne through violence and murder. By their example and influence they had thus done all in their power to thwart the very purpose of Jehovah in the choice of Israel. No wonder that the prophet felt himself arrayed in spirit against them, no wonder that he classes them along with the idols as false rivals of Jehovah, and no wonder that Jehovah himself says, "They have set up kings but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not" (8. 3). "I give thee a king in mine anger and take him away in my wrath" (13. 11). Kings and people alike had sown to the wind and so were now about to reap the whirlwind (8. 7).

In this indictment of Israel it is to be ob-

served that Hosea does not treat the different evils here spoken of as though they were independent of each other. They are all of one piece, all exhibitions of one cardinal sin, and that sin is apostasy from Jehovah. The immorality, the idolatry, the foreign alliances, the man-made kings—all these were instances of disloyalty on Israel's part to the God of her fathers. At the outset she had been true to him (2. 14f.; 9. 10). She had responded with ardor to his affection. But soon thereafter she turned away from him. Like Adam she transgressed the covenant (6. 7). And since then her history has been one long illustration of infidelity to him. She has dealt treacherously and rebelled against him (5. 7; 13. 16). What she needs, therefore, above everything else is to return to him. She needs to learn righteousness and kindness and the knowledge of God (4. 1; 6. 6; 10. 12; 12. 6). This is her supreme duty, and this also is the panacea for all her ills. But so addicted have her children become to evil, that "their doings will not suffer them to turn unto their God" (5. 4). In some moment of affliction they may, to be sure, say to one another, "Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten and he will bind us up" (6. 1). But this is not seriously meant. It is merely a

passing mood. And so Jehovah says unto them: "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the dew that goeth early away" (6. 4). What they need is a radical change of character. They must break up their fallow ground (10. 12). A new birth, indeed, is needed, but the moral energy necessary to bring this about is lacking (13. 13). And so "the years that might have been the nation's birth are by their own folly to prove their death."

But unfaithful as Israel had been, and certain as was her doom, this fact did not obscure the divine love. In a passion of indignation at her infidelity, Jehovah might say that he would love her no more (9. 15). But this did not represent his settled state of mind. "Jehovah," we read elsewhere, "loveth the children of Israel, though they turn unto other gods" (3. 1). His love is constant. It is not canceled by human sin. This is the great teaching of Hosea. This is the gospel that he brought into the world. Various figures are used to express the intimacy and tenderness of Jehovah's relation to Israel. He is the husband, Israel is the wife. This figure, as we have seen, forms the substance of chapters 1 to 3. But it is also implied

in the rest of the book. Israel, for instance, is represented as dwelling in Jehovah's house (8. 1; 9. 15). Her wickedness or disobedience is regularly spoken of as harlotry (4. 11; 1. 2; 5. 3, 4; 6. 9). And her moral and material improvement is expressed by the idea of a return on her own part (5. 4; 6. 1; 7. 10, 16; 12. 6), and that of a redemption on the part of Jehovah (7. 13; 13. 14). These expressions are evidently allusions to the story of chapters 1 to 3. Another figure used to express Jehovah's relation to Israel is that of a physician (6. 1; 7. 1; 14. 5; compare 5. 13). He is also said to be their only "saviour" (13. 4). But more impressive than these figures is that of Jehovah as Father to Israel: "When Israel was a child," says Jehovah, "then I loved him, and called him out of Egypt.... I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms,... I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (11. 1-4). In view of this tender relationship, it is not strange that after a severe denunciation of Israel Jehovah cries out,

> "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?
> How shall I cast thee off, Israel?
> How shall I make thee as Admah?
> How shall I set thee as Zeboim?
> My heart is turned within me,
> My compassions are kindled together" (11. 8).

This, as G. A. Smith says, is the "greatest passage in Hosea—deepest if not highest of his book."

From it we pass naturally to a consideration of Hosea's message of hope. This message is not confined, as in Amos, to the last chapter (14. 1-8), but appears in other parts of the book as well (1. 10 to 2. 1; 2. 14-23; 3. 1-5; 11. 10, 11). Hosea seems to have used, as Amos did not, the hope of a better future to lure the people on to obedience to Jehovah. It is interesting to observe how he represents the better future as in almost every regard the golden counterpart of the present. The marriage bond between Israel and Jehovah is now broken, but in the better future there is to be a new betrothal. "I will betroth thee unto me," says Jehovah, "forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies" (2. 19). And Israel in that day will make answer "as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt" (2. 15). At present, the Israelites bear names that speak of doom and rejection, but in the better future these names are either to be changed or to be given a new significance. Jezreel, instead of pointing to the battlefield where Israel is to be overthrown (1. 4, 5), will designate the place where the children of Judah

and the children of Israel shall gather together under one head and go up from the whole land, "for great shall be the day of Jezreel" (1. 11). The name "Jezreel," as applied to Israel, will then also be true to its etymology. It means "God sows," and so, after the exile, Israel will be sown again in her own land by Jehovah (2. 23). At present, the children of Israel also bear the names of Lo-ruhamah ("Unpitied") and Lo-ammi ("Not my people"), but these names are hereafter to lose their negatives, and to signify that the Israelites have again become the people of Jehovah and the object of his mercy, "the sons of the living God" (2. 23; 2. 1; 1. 10). The covenant likewise between Jehovah and Israel, which is now broken, will then be renewed, and extended so as to include the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens (2. 18).

The prophecies of hope in Hosea thus dovetail into the rest of the book. Their language and style are also thoroughly Hoseanic. Nevertheless, not a few critics reject them all as later additions, on the ground chiefly that they are inconsistent with the prophet's message of doom. Jehovah, for instance, declares in 9. 15 that he will drive Israel from his home, and that he will love them no more. In 14. 4 on the other hand, he says, "I will heal their backsliding, I

will love them freely." Between these two utterances there is, it is claimed, a complete contradiction. And formally this is true. But those who interpret language, not by the dictionary, but by the life and experience out of which it grows, need have no difficulty in believing that both statements came from the same man, especially when it is borne in mind that he was operating with traditional material. The hope of a glorious future was not new with Hosea. He accepted it from the past, and may not have felt the necessity of harmonizing it with his message of doom. Then, besides, we are not, of course, to suppose that his prophecies of hope and those of doom were composed at one and the same time. They may have been written at considerable intervals from each other. Their present arrangement was probably not the work of Hosea himself. But, apart from this, strict, formal consistency is no rule of life. It belongs only to the closet thinker. No one ought to expect it of such an emotional person as Hosea. His conception, moreover, of the passionate love of Jehovah must, it would seem, have led ultimately to a message of hope, for where there is no faith and no hope, there is no love. Love believeth all things, and hopeth all things. The promise, therefore, of Israel's restoration was the natural outcome of the proph-

et's doctrine of the divine love, and an integral part of his message.

This promise, it is true, was not realized in the form in which Hosea expected it. Israel went into captivity and was never restored to her native land. But hope did not on that account die out. Hosea had made the great thought of the love of God the permanent possession of mankind, and through the centuries this thought continued to generate anew fresh hopes for the future. These hopes from being national became international, and from being political became spiritual, until, finally, they culminated in the supreme conception of human history, that of the God-man. Hosea himself barely refers to the Messianic King (1. 11), but his profound conception of the divine love points more directly than any specific prediction could to Bethlehem and Calvary and the right hand of God where intercession is made for us.

CHAPTER IV

ISAIAH THE PROPHET OF FAITH

THE book of Isaiah has been one of the chief battlefields of modern criticism. The struggle is now over. It is at present generally agreed that a large—indeed, the larger—part of the book is not the work of Isaiah, the son of Amoz. But this fact has not materially detracted from the significance which through the ages has attached to him. He is still the greatest of prophets.

Amos and Hosea, as we have seen, owe their present distinction chiefly to their originality. This is also one element in the greatness of Isaiah. As Amos was the first to identify religion absolutely with the moral law, and as Hosea was the first to make religion fundamentally a matter of love, so Isaiah was the first to formulate the great doctrine of faith as the condition of salvation. In originality, therefore, he ranks along with Amos and Hosea. But to this he added other qualities of a unique character. First, he possessed extraordinary literary ability. As a writer he wielded a two-

edged sword. "Never," says Cornill, "did the speech of Canaan pour forth with more brilliant splendor and triumphant beauty than from his lips. He has a strength and power of language, a majesty and sublimity of expression, and an inexhaustible richness of fitting and stirring imagery, that overwhelms the reader, nay, bewilders him." In the next place, he had a strong and commanding personality, which, by virtue of his high social station and long public ministry, he was able to bring to bear with tremendous power upon the political and religious issues of the day. The ministry of Amos had apparently been of brief duration, and Hosea seems to have stood apart from the controlling forces in the nation's life. Isaiah, on the other hand, mingled freely with the leaders of the day. He watched their intrigues, he sought to circumvent their secret plans, he denounced their godless policies. Even the king he rebuked to his face for his alliance with the Assyrians. In this way, through a long ministry of forty to fifty years, he exerted a potent influence on the public life of the nation, and thus eventually won for himself a commanding position in the affairs of state. It is this fact, coupled with the originality of his thought and his unique power of expression, that has given to him his preeminence among the prophets.

In view of Isaiah's political importance, it is natural that we should be better informed with reference to his life than that of either Amos or Hosea. Not only does he refer more frequently to himself; there are also references to him in the second book of Kings (chapters 19, 20; compare Isa. 37 to 39). Like Amos, he was a native of Judah, but, unlike him, he lived in the capital city and was probably of noble birth. This we infer from the fact that he seems to have had ready access to the king and the court (7. 3ff.; 8. 2; 22. 15ff.). He was married and had two sons. To these he gave symbolic names. One was called Shear-yashub—"A-remnant-shall-return" (7. 3); and the other bore the less easily pronounceable name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz—"Swift-booty-speedy-prey" (8. 3). These names expressed two important aspects of the prophet's teaching. So wherever the lads went, they were "for signs and for wonders in Israel" (8. 18). One can at first hardly withhold a feeling of sympathy for them when one thinks that they were thus without their own consent forced to be the constant bearers of such serious messages. But the fact that Isaiah gave them these names is an eloquent testimony to the intensity of his own prophetic conviction. He made his whole household contribute to the one great mission of his life. For

his wife also he speaks of as "the prophetess" (8. 3).

The prophetic call came to Isaiah "in the year that King Uzziah died." This was about B. C. 740. The description of the call and the vision that accompanied it is one of the most impressive passages in the Old Testament (chapter 6). The prophet, apparently while worshiping in the temple (compare verses 4 to 6), sees the Lord in his heavenly sanctuary "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." He is "the King, Jehovah of hosts." Naturally, then, he is accompanied by an angelic retinue, the seraphim, who hide themselves with their wings from the glory of his presence and cry one to the other, "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (6. 3). They do not, it may be noted, pray as we do that his name may be hallowed, and that his kingdom may come and his will be done. Theirs is a voice out of eternity. It is not a prayer; it is a proclamation. Already for them the divine name is hallowed; already to their vision the whole earth is full of the divine glory. This conception of the majesty and holiness of Jehovah was determinative for the whole ministry of Isaiah. It was the thought in which he lived and moved and had his being. To him the one great fact of the universe was the sovereignty of God.

"The lofty looks of men shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted" (2. 11). This was his almost constant theme. Nothing might with impunity exalt itself against the Holy One of Israel (5. 19, 24). His will was supreme and absolute (14. 27).

Over against such an august presence there was only one feeling that could enter the prophet's mind, and that was one of unworthiness and sinfulness. But this feeling did not overwhelm him and throw him into a state of passivity. He received the assurance of the divine forgiveness, and then as he heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" promptly replied, "Here am I; send me." This reply was characteristic of the man and of his conception of human nature. However weak in his view men might be without God (31. 3), however helpless and impotent as over against him (10. 15; 2. 22), they were by no means necessarily ignoble creatures, nor was their proper attitude toward him one of abject dependence. They might cooperate with God, might further his purposes, and so by an active faith come to be truly his. Drunkenness (28. 7) and idolatry (2. 8) were unworthy of them as human beings, and so also was brutal treatment at the hands of others

(3. 14f.). The prophet believed in the dignity of human nature. And not only did he believe in it, he illustrated it in his own life. His was a regal mind. In the face of the most threatening danger he stood unmoved. He walked among men as a king. He trod the high places of the earth.

The commission Isaiah received in his inaugural vision was far from an inspiring one. His message was to be one of doom, doom to both Israel and Judah, and doom, apparently, to the bitter end. The reference to "the holy seed" in 6. 13, which is lacking in the Septuagint, is commonly supposed to be a later addition. But even if it belonged to the original call, the gloominess of the prophet's commission was not greatly relieved thereby, for the delivery of his message was to have the reverse effect upon the people from that naturally expected. Instead of leading to their conversion it was to harden their hearts and make them more unresponsive than ever to the divine word. Indeed, this actual effect is stated as though it were the purpose of Isaiah's mission (verses 9, 10). This way of putting the case is, of course, ironical, and perhaps reflects to some extent the disappointing experiences of later years. But the fact that it forms a part of the inaugural vision makes it clear that the prophet was under no

illusion with reference to the outcome of his ministry even at the outset. Popular success was not to be his. Still, he devoted himself to his divinely appointed task with intense earnestness and carried on his mission through a long lifetime with unfailing fidelity and unwearying enthusiasm.

The ministry of Isaiah was so intimately connected with the history of the nation that we need the latter as a background for it. After the death of Uzziah, in B. C. 740, Jotham came to the throne and ruled perhaps five years. In 735 he was succeeded by Ahaz, who reigned sixteen years. After him came Hezekiah, who was king from about B. C. 719 to 686. Contemporaneous with these kings of Judah were four Assyrian kings—Tiglathpileser III (B. C. 747-727), Shalmaneser V (B. C. 727-722), Sargon II (B. C. 722-705), and Sennacherib (B. C. 705-681), all monarchs of great ability, who carried on victorious campaigns along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. The period covered by these Assyrian and Judean kings was one of the most critical in the whole of Israelitic history. A number of very important events occurred in it. In B. C. 734 took place what is known as the Syro-Ephraimitic war. Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Ephraim, conspired together to depose Ahaz,

king of Judah. The attempt failed, but it led Ahaz to appeal to Assyria for aid. The result was that the next year an Assyrian army invaded the northern part of Israel, devastated the region round about the sea of Galilee, and deported a large number of the inhabitants. Damascus also was captured the following year (B. C. 732). This, as well as the preceding event, was a serious blow to Israel. For Damascus had for some time served as a buffer between Israel and Assyria, and its capture left the way open to the Assyrian armies whenever they might choose again to invade Israelitic territory.

Ten years later, in B. C. 722 or 721, Samaria itself fell after a siege of three years. This put an end forever to the larger part of the old Davidic kingdom. Strangely, Isaiah, while he predicted this event (17. 1-11; 9. 8-21; 28. 1-4), says nothing about it after it occurred. Nevertheless, it must have produced a profound impression upon the surviving kingdom of Judah. It must have made her feel that she, too, was standing on the brink. But after a few years of peace and quiet, confidence was again restored, and in 711, in spite of the strenuous opposition of Isaiah, Hezekiah was apparently induced to join with Ashdod and other Philistine cities in a revolt against the Assyrian over-

lord. The result was the capture of Ashdod and the deportation of her inhabitants. Judah seems somehow to have escaped punishment. Perhaps on the approach of the Assyrian army she may have renewed her allegiance to the Assyrian king, and thus have succeeded in reinstating herself in his favor.

But whatever occurred at this time, the spirit of revolt was still kept alive, and after the death of Sargon in 705 broke out again with new vigor. Isaiah once more attempted to stem the tide, but all to no avail. Judah and most of the other Palestinian states, spurred on by Egypt, threw off the Assyrian yoke. The new king Sennacherib was for a while kept busy by other revolts in the east, but in 701 appeared in the west-land with a large army. The rebellious coast cities were speedily subdued, and then detachments of his troops began marching up the valleys of Judah. Forty-six walled cities, so the conqueror tells us, were captured, and Hezekiah himself was shut up in Jerusalem like a caged bird. For a while he resisted, but finally bought off the besiegers by paying them thirty talents of gold and three hundred talents of silver, and surrendering to them a large number of young men and women as hostages.

What took place immediately after this is a question. The common opinion has been that

Sennacherib resumed his march toward Egypt, but shortly afterward repented of the agreement he had made with Hezekiah, and so in direct violation of his word sent back a demand for the unconditional surrender of the city. But this demand he was unable to make good. Because of a pestilence or political disturbances at home, his Egyptian campaign was suddenly interrupted and he was forced to return to Assyria. More recently, however, the tendency among Assyriologists has been to assign this event to a later date. Some put it in B. C. 690, and others a few years later still. If this view be correct, the campaign of 701 ended with Hezekiah's payment of tribute and promise of allegiance for the future. It was not, then, until ten or fifteen years later that Sennacherib demanded the surrender of Jerusalem and was providentially prevented from enforcing his demand. As Isaiah was still active in Jerusalem at the time this demand was made, it is clear that, if the later date be correct, his ministry must have been ten or even fifteen years longer than has commonly been supposed. That it lasted forty years has always been clear, but the more recent view implies that it extended over a period of at least fifty and perhaps fifty-five years. In harmony with this is the fact that according to later Jewish tradition Isaiah met

a martyr's death during the reign of Manasseh, that is, after B. C. 686.

With the main events of this important period of Hebrew history in mind, let us now consider more particularly Isaiah's personal relation to them. At the time of the Syro-Ephraimitic war, Ahaz was in great fear, and so one day went out to inspect the water supply of Jerusalem to make sure that it would not be cut off in case of a siege (7. 1-13). While there, Isaiah, accompanied by his son Shear-yashub, went out to meet him. He assured the king that there was no real cause of alarm. The two hostile kings, Pekah and Rezin, were not to be taken seriously. They were simply two tails of smoking firebrands, "the last flicker of two expiring torches." Before long they would both be subdued by the Assyrians. Moreover, the very fact that their design was an evil one, opposed to the will of Jehovah, was a guarantee that it would come to naught. With Jehovah as guardian and protector of Jerusalem there was no reason to fear Samaria and Damascus with their merely human chiefs. All that Ahaz needed was faith.

But Ahaz was a child of the Dragon's teeth. He required something more substantial than a merely spiritual principle to bolster him up. Isaiah, therefore, declared that Jehovah stood

ready to perform a miracle, if necessary, in order to convince him of the truth of his message, and, furthermore, challenged him to ask for such a sign in the heavens above or the earth beneath. But Ahaz dared not accept the challenge. The fact is he had already decided to appeal to Assyria for aid, and in his heart of hearts believed that the king of Assyria was more to be trusted than Jehovah. So the two men parted, one seeking with fear and trembling the aid of a foreign power, the other buoyed up by an unshakable religious faith.

Events turned out as Isaiah had predicted. The two northern kingdoms of Samaria and Damascus were soon overrun by the Assyrians, and Judah was left in a tributary relation to the invaders. When this relationship had once been established, Isaiah looked upon it as binding and had no sympathy with the spirit of revolt. We have a good illustration of this in connection with the rebellion of Ashdod in B. C. 711 (chapter 20). Efforts had been made for years by the emissaries of Ethiopia and Egypt to induce Judah to join in the rebellion, and a measure of success seems to have attended these efforts. But Isaiah opposed them with all the intensity of his being. He declared that such a revolt would certainly be disastrous, and that Egypt and Ethiopia instead of rendering aid to

the revolting states would themselves be carried away into ignominious captivity. Then, in order to emphasize this message, he walked three years through the streets of Jerusalem clad as a captive, barefoot and almost naked. We get some idea of the complete abandon, the almost fanatical intensity of Isaiah from such a scene as this. Here is a man of high social station, probably related to the royal family, who is willing through three long years to expose himself to the jeers and scorn of his fellow townsmen in order to impress upon them an important but unwelcome truth.

The same opposition to a break with Assyria manifested itself again eight or ten years later when another revolt was instigated. Isaiah denounced any alliance with Egypt (30. 1-7; 31. 1-3). Those leaders of Judah, he declared, who were seeking to bring it about were doing so against the will of Jehovah, and would consequently derive from it no profit, but would, rather, be thrown by it into shame and confusion. Between Egypt, on the one hand, with her chariots and horsemen, and Jehovah on the other, the prophet saw a complete antithesis. "The Egyptians," he says, "are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit" (31. 3). God and spirit he thus directly opposed to men and flesh. And as between the

two there was no doubt in his own mind which would ultimately triumph.

But most of his countrymen did not see things as he did. One day, for instance, he came upon a company of reveling prophets and priests, and began to rebuke them not only for their drunkenness but also because they were by their false visions and judgments encouraging the spirit of revolt (28. 7-13). In reply they asked him if he thought he was talking to babes, and then uttered a number of monosyllables which are really untranslatable. They are rendered in the English version by the words, "precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little." But this rendering fails altogether to reproduce the force of the original. And I am inclined to think it would be better simply to transliterate what we have in the Hebrew, and then leave it to the reader to get from it such meaning as he can. The actual words used were these: *"Tsav le-tsav, tsav le-tsav; kav le-kav, kav le-kav*—Here a little, there a little." Now, exactly what meaning these words were intended to convey we do not know with certainty. Two different interpretations are suggested by the context. The reference to babes in 28. 9 suggests that they may have been the words used in teaching a child to walk. On the other hand,

the reference to strange lips and another tongue in 28. 11 suggests that we have here an imitation of the effect produced upon the ears of a Hebrew by the unintelligible speech of a foreigner. What, then, the priests and the prophets meant was to express their complete indifference to the prophet's message. It had no more significance to them than the rude jargon of a foreigner. But whatever may have been the original meaning of these monosyllables, they were at least intended to be scornful. And so Isaiah turned to the reveling prophets and priests and said: "You have spurned my instruction, you have refused to adopt my policy of peace; therefore, Jehovah will speak to you in the rude, barbaric speech of the invader. He will use in addressing you the very words you have attributed to me. He will say to you, *'Tsav le-tsav; tsav le-tsav; kav le-kav, kav le-kav*—Here a little, there a little,' until he has driven you to your ruin."

Another striking scene from the same period of the prophet's ministry is found in chapter 22. The people have assembled on the housetops. It is a gala day. There is shouting and rejoicing. What the exact occasion was we do not know. As good a suggestion as any is that it was a celebration of Hezekiah's declaration of independence from Assyria. This the people

thought would mean a new era to them. And so there was joy and gladness. But the prophet looks upon it very differently. He sees in it simply an unwarranted revolt, that is certain to bring with it a dire penalty. In the midst, therefore, of the festive throng he breaks out into a lamentation as he thinks of the impending doom (verse 2b-3). Some bystanders overhear his cry of grief and try to console him, but he thrusts them aside, saying, "Look away from me, I will weep bitterly; labor not to comfort me for the destruction of the daughter of my people" (verse 4). The revolt from Assyria ought to have been a "call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth" (verse 12). But here instead we have a day of frivolous gayety, a day of feasting and rejoicing, "slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine" (verse 13). There are those in the assembled multitude who know well enough the prophet's opinion of the revolt, who know that he has predicted that it would speedily be followed by ruin and death. But they have no fear, and so in their light-hearted festivities encourage one another, saying, with gleeful scorn: "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow (as the prophet says) we shall die" (verse 13). On hearing this, Isaiah's soul is stirred to its deep-

est depths, and he cries out—the very words, he says, ringing in his ears as he hears them from Jehovah—"Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you till ye die" (verse 14).

From these scenes it is clear what Isaiah's attitude was toward the attempts made by his countrymen to throw off the Assyrian yoke. But there is another side to the picture. While Isaiah opposed the spirit of revolt in Judah and while he counseled submission to Assyria, he was by no means satisfied with the role that the latter was playing in the world. She was, to be sure, the rod of Jehovah's anger and the staff of his indignation. She was commissioned by him to punish Judah and other nations for their sins. But this commission she did not herself recognize (10. 5-7). It was wholly ideal. It existed only in the mind of Jehovah and his prophet. She herself was actuated simply by a heathen lust for power. She saw no spiritual purpose in her campaigns. She acknowledged no superintending Providence. She knew no God worthy of the name. Against Jehovah she exalted herself in pride (10. 12-15). To her aggressions, therefore, it was evident there must be some limit. Her arrogance could not be permanently tolerated. The time must needs come when she would overstep the bounds of the divine patience. And so we find in Isaiah a num-

ber of passages in which her sudden overthrow is predicted (14. 24-27; 17. 12-14; 10. 16-34; 30. 27-33; 31. 4-9; 18. 5-6; 29. 5-8). The authenticity of all these passages has been called in question by some critics on the ground that they are inconsistent with other utterances of the prophet. There is, it is claimed, no period in the prophet's life when the change from the conception of Assyria as the instrument of Jehovah to that of Assyria as a God-hostile power could have taken place. But this is a mistake. Such a period, if it were needed, could be found, as Staerk has shown, between B. C. 701 and 690. As a matter of fact, however, it is clear from what was said above (compare 10. 7-11) that the idea of Assyria as a power hostile to Jehovah must have always lain near to the prophet's thought. Moreover, this conception was quite in line with the old eschatological idea of the final overthrow of the enemies of Israel. Therefore, all that was needed was some special occasion to call it forth. And one such occasion at least was furnished by Sennacherib (2 Kings 19 and 20; Isa. 36 to 39).

When this occasion came, whether in 701 or 690, or even later, is a question. But whatever its date, it consisted in the demand of Sennacherib for the unconditional surrender of Jerusalem. Whether this demand was in direct

violation of an agreement he had just made with Hezekiah or not, it was at least unjust. When, therefore, it came, Isaiah stepped forward, just as he had done in the time of Ahaz when the city was threatened in a similar way by Pekah and Rezin, and assured the king that there was no real ground for fear. Sennacherib, he declared, would never lay siege to the city, but the Lord would put his hook in his nose and lead him back by the way that he came (37. 29). There was no outward indication that any such thing would occur. Nevertheless, this very thing took place. On the borders of Egypt, as we have already seen, because of a pestilence or political disturbances at home, Sennacherib suddenly stayed his advance, returned to Assyria, and never again appeared in the west-land. This was a remarkable fulfillment of a specific prediction—perhaps the most remarkable in all the Old Testament—and must have produced a profound impression in Jerusalem. It was not, it is true, an exact fulfillment of Isaiah's other anti-Assyrian prophecies. But it at least shows what may have occasioned them.

After this survey of the life of Isaiah and the history of his times, we are ready to turn to the book itself which bears his name. This book is one of the longest in the Bible, containing

sixty-six chapters. There are two parts to it—chapters 1 to 39 and 40 to 66. The latter forms a book by itself, and is commonly assigned to another author, known as Second or Deutero-Isaiah, who probably lived one hundred and fifty or two hundred years later than Isaiah and who was hardly a less significant prophet than Isaiah himself. The first part of the book may be subdivided into six divisions: chapters 1 to 12, 13 to 23, 24 to 27, 28 to 33, 34 and 35, and 36 to 39. Of these, chapters 36 to 39 are for the most part an excerpt from 2 Kings and hence cannot be attributed to Isaiah. Chapters 34 and 35 and 24 to 27 are also generally assigned to later hands. This leaves chapters 1 to 23 and 28 to 33. In these chapters later additions are no doubt to be found, for example, 13. 1 to 14. 23; 21. 1-17. But here, as elsewhere, in the prophetic literature, the tendency to call in the "later hand" has in recent years been carried to a wholly unjustifiable extreme. The anti-Assyrian prophecies in Isaiah, for instance, the Messianic prophecies, and the passages that seem to teach the inviolability of Jerusalem have all been declared to be later additions. For this there is no adequate ground, and against this analytic procedure there is certain to be a reaction. Indeed, the reaction has already set in. Old Testament scholars in increasing numbers are

coming to see that the Procrustean beds which many modern critics have made for the ancient prophets are too short to fit the actual historical personalities.

In reading the prophecies of Isaiah we are first impressed, as we were also in the cases of Amos and Hosea, with the prominence of the message of doom. Throughout practically the whole of his ministry this seems to have been the staple of his public discourses. From his inaugural vision in B. C. 740 down, at least, to the invasion of Sennacherib in 701, the one thing he seems to have been most concerned to impress upon the people of his day was the fact of the impending doom. He predicted it again and again under the most varied forms. These predictions were, of course, based upon the conviction of the certainty of their fulfillment. But they were not made simply as pieces of vaticination. Their purpose was a practical one—to arouse the people to moral earnestness and to a sense of their obligation to Jehovah. The doom thus predicted applied, as we have seen, to Israel as well as Judah. Nor was it to be confined to the Hebrews. There was to be a day of doom for the Assyrians also. Indeed, it was to be general. "There shall be," says the prophet, "a day of Jehovah of hosts upon all that is proud and haughty, and upon all that is lifted up; and

it shall be brought low" (2. 12). Isaiah, like the other prophets, felt himself standing face to face with a great and decisive day of judgment. The impending catastrophe was not to be simply political. It was to be an "overflowing scourge" (28. 15, 18), involving the destiny of all. So back of his message of doom lay all the grounds of passionate earnestness that are to be found in the discourses of any preacher who is dealing with the eternal issues of life.

A second fact that impresses us as we read the prophecies of Isaiah is that the moral and religious condition of Judah in his time was essentially the same as that of Israel in the practically contemporaneous period of Amos and Hosea. There was the same oppression of the poor by the rich, the same general corruption, the same idolatry, the same trust in ceremonialism, and the same seeking of foreign aid. Isaiah condemns the princes as "rebellious, and companions of thieves" (1. 23). They "crush," he says, "my people, and grind the face of the poor" (3. 15). They "justify the wicked for a bribe" (5. 23), and "rob the poor of my people of their right" (10. 2). Drunkenness he likewise condemns (5. 11, 22; 28. 7), and the luxury of the wanton women (3. 16ff.). The whole people, he says, are "laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers" (1. 4). "The whole head is sick,

and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it" (1. 5, 6). The land, furthermore, is "full of idols"; the people "worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made" (2. 8). They are also "full of divination, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and practice sorcery as the children of foreigners" (2. 6, emended text). To be sure, they profess belief in Jehovah. They are assiduous in the performance of sacrifices and the offering of incense. But their worship is wholly formal. "They draw nigh unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men which hath been taught them" (29. 13). What they really believe in is not Jehovah, but silver and gold, horses and chariots, soldiers and horsemen. Hence, instead of seeking the aid of Jehovah they seek the aid of foreign powers. They go first to Assyria, and then when the Assyrian overlordship becomes burdensome seek the aid of Egypt. Their policy throughout is an irreligious militarism. It is a placing of trust in men and flesh rather than in God and spirit.

In meeting this general situation Isaiah's tone resembles that of Amos rather than that of Hosea. In only one instance do we find a

distinctly Hoseanic or Jeremianic strain in his prophecies (22. 4). As a rule, he is stern and severe, showing very little sympathy with the wrongdoers of his day. Take, for instance, the woes in 5. 8-23 on the greedy land-grabbers (verses 8-10), the careless revelers (verses 11-13), the frivolous unbelievers (verses 18, 19), the moral skeptics (verse 20), the sophists of the time (verse 21), and the dissolute and corrupt judges (verses 22, 23). Or take the treatment of religious rites and ceremonies in 1. 11-17:

What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah:
I have had enough of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts;
And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.
When ye come to appear before me,
Who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts?
Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me;
New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies,—I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting.
Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth;
They are a trouble unto me; I am weary of bearing them.
And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you;
Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear:
Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean;

Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes;
Cease to do evil, learn to do well;
Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

This is one of the most important utterances anywhere to be found on the worthlessness of mere ceremonialism (compare Amos 5. 21-24; Hos. 6. 6; Mic. 6. 6-8). It is followed by a verse which looks at first like a promise of forgiveness (1. 18). Indeed, it is so rendered in the English version: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." But such an offer of pardon is hardly in harmony with the preceding passage nor with the tone of the Isaianic prophecies as a whole. It is probable, therefore, that the last two sentences of the verse should be treated as questions: "Come, let us implead one another, saith Jehovah: if your sins be as scarlet, shall they become white as snow? Be they red as crimson, shall they become as wool?" The answer, of course, is an emphatic "No." The popular idea that sins may be removed by sacrifices is wholly without foundation. The very thought of it is utterly to be spurned.

But while the general tone of Isaiah's prophecies thus resembles that of Amos, there is one

important regard in which his method of dealing with the evils of his day is like that of Hosea. Hosea carried back all the sins of the people to one root evil—that of unfaithfulness to Jehovah. Their immorality, their idolatry, their man-made kings, their seeking of foreign aid, all he regarded as instances of apostasy from Jehovah. And so in Isaiah we find a similar tendency to reduce the moral and religious life to one underlying principle. This principle in Isaiah is faith. In his view, then, the cardinal sin of Israel is unbelief or pride. In developing this idea of one root principle in the moral and religious life, Isaiah is not so thoroughgoing as Hosea. He does not speak so frequently of faith as Hosea does of love, nor does he ascribe the different evils of his day to unbelief or pride in the same direct way that Hosea attributes them to disloyalty to Jehovah. Nevertheless, it is clear to the careful student that this represents his fundamental thought.

It was in connection with the political policy of Judah that Isaiah's doctrine of faith received its clearest expression. That policy was, when the country was in danger or oppressed, to seek aid from outside. Ahaz, for instance, when he was threatened by Pekah and Rezin, sought help from Assyria. And later Hezekiah, when the Assyrian yoke became heavy, appealed to Egypt

for relief. As against this policy, Isaiah pleaded for faith in Jehovah. To Ahaz, who was trembling with fear at the approach of the two kings from the north, he said, "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither let thy heart be faint" (7. 4). And then after assuring him that Jehovah would not permit the design of these enemies to be carried out, he adds this word of warning: "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (7. 9). In the original this memorable utterance contains a paronomasia, which makes it somewhat more striking. "No faith, no fixity" is the way McFadyen renders it. G. A. Smith puts it thus: "If ye will not have faith, ye shall not have staith." And Box has this rendering: "Verily, if thou have no strong trust—no trusty stronghold shall be thine." The important thing, however, is not the form of the statement but its meaning. It is here clearly stated—and for the first time so far as we know—that faith is the condition of salvation. If Judah was to be saved, it could be only by faith in Jehovah. His presence in Jerusalem, typified by the "waters of Shiloah that go softly," was their only security. When the people, therefore, refused these waters the prophet declared that they would certainly be deluged by the overflowing waters of the Euphrates (8. 5-8). Assyria whom they had

appealed to for help would prove the cause of their ruin.

Likewise, in the time of Hezekiah, when the spirit of revolt against Assyria broke out, and an alliance was about to be made with Egypt, Isaiah again pleaded for a policy of peace and trust. "This," he said, "is the rest, give ye rest to him that is weary; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (28. 12). In the midst of the intriguing and the confusion he therefore pointed once more to the quiet presence of Jehovah in Jerusalem as the one ground of confidence. "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not be in haste" (28. 16). And then a little later he added: "By sitting still and resting shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. And ye would not" (30. 15). Somewhat later still—perhaps as late as B. C. 690—an embassy from Ethiopia came to Jerusalem, evidently for the purpose of inducing Judah to join in a league against Assyria. The time seems to have been a perilous one. The Assyrian armies were again threatening the westland. Terror and confusion were abroad. Nevertheless, Isaiah remained undisturbed, and sent the Ethiopian ambassadors away with the assur-

ance that he saw no occasion for alarm. "For thus," he says, "hath Jehovah said unto me, I will be still, and I will look on in my dwelling place, like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest" (18. 4). In this sublime utterance we have the climax of the prophet's expression of faith. What more perfect symbols of the divine calm could be found than the motionless air of a hot summer day and the invisible cloud of dew in harvest time! And what finer and surer evidence could there be of the prophet's own unruffled trust than this vivid apprehension on his part of the eternal calm of God in the midst of earth's turmoil!

In all the passages just cited Isaiah advocates, directly or indirectly, trust in Jehovah as against all political intriguing. It is thus an interesting fact that the doctrine of faith was first formulated as a political or rather anti-political policy. Isaiah took the position that it was unwise for Judah to enter into entangling alliances with other nations, that such alliances would simply mean ruin to herself. The prudent thing for her to do was to accept the *status quo*, trust in Jehovah, do his will, and await the time when he himself would redeem her. This policy has been commended by modern critics as that of a far-sighted statesman. And it is probably true that Isaiah estimated more correctly than the

Judean kings and their counselors the political forces of the day. He saw more clearly than they the hopelessness of any revolt against Assyria. But still it would be a mistake to suppose that the policy he advocated was simply the outcome of clear political insight. It was, rather, the expression of an idealistic faith. He believed that the really controlling forces in the world were spiritual, not material; divine, not human. Hence, the one important thing for Judah to do was to obey the will of God, to put herself on his side. It was thus a deep religious conviction that was at once the source and substance of Isaiah's political policy. In the ordinary sense of the term he was not a statesman at all. He was, to be sure, interested in politics. The conditions of his time and his own social position made that inevitable. But his interest was that of the seer rather than that of the man of affairs. In him the idealist completely overshadowed the practical administrator. At bottom he was a religious teacher. And the burden of his message was the doctrine of faith. He applied this doctrine most clearly to the political conditions of his time. But it was by no means simply a political principle with him. It was a profound personal experience, the mainspring of his life. When adverse conditions, for instance, confronted him, when he

felt that he was accomplishing little or nothing, he turned his face upward and said, "I will wait for Jehovah, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him" (8. 17).

But faith with Isaiah took on a more definite form than has thus far been indicated. It led him on at least two occasions to assert that Jerusalem would not be captured by the enemy then threatening it. These two occasions were the Syro-Ephraimitic war (B. C. 734) and the invasion of Sennacherib (B. C. 701 or 690). In both of these instances the enemy was acting in defiance of the will of Jehovah, and hence Jerusalem was safe. Some hold that the prophet did not confine his teaching on this point to any specific occasions, but that he made of the inviolability of Jerusalem a "dogma." This, however, is inconsistent with a number of utterances in which he predicts the complete destruction of the city (32. 14; 22. 14; 3. 26; 5. 5f.; 6. 11f.). Then, too, it is inherently improbable that the man who believed that the glory of Jehovah filled the whole earth, and that his government was righteous and impartial, would hold to the inviolable sacredness of any place regardless of the character of its inhabitants. He might assert with perfect confidence that under certain circumstances Jerusalem would not be captured, and he might see in Zion a symbol of the

eternal kingdom of God (28. 16; 8. 18), but he would hardly make the ability of the city to resist all foreign attacks a vital question of faith. This was a later misconstruction of his teaching, and not a part of his own message.

Another definite expression of Isaiah's faith is to be found in his doctrine of the remnant (4. 2f.; 7. 3; 10. 20ff.; 11. 16; 28. 5; 37. 31). The idea of a remnant who would be saved out of the impending doom was not new with Isaiah. It appears in Amos (5. 14f.), and also in the account of Elijah in First Kings (19. 18). It was evidently a familiar idea in the time of Isaiah. Otherwise he would not have embodied it in the symbolical name given to his older son (7. 3). "A-remnant-shall-return" would have meant nothing to the people, if the conception had been an altogether new one. Hence Isaiah did not originate the idea of the salvation of a remnant, but he made it more prominent than the preceding prophets had done. In and of itself the idea has a double significance: it implies that a remnant, and only a remnant, will be saved. There is thus an element of doom in it. On the other hand, it implies that the whole nation is not to be destroyed. Some will return to Jehovah and be preserved. There is, accordingly, in it also an element of hope. And this is the idea usually associated with it (10. 20ff.).

We have then in this conception of the remnant the connecting link between the prophetic message of doom and that of hope. In the impending judgment a few will be saved, and they will become the holy seed from which a new nation or community will grow.

The Messianic prophecies in Isaiah, like those in Amos and Hosea, are rejected by some critics. But the reasons given for their rejection lose their force as soon as it is recognized that the Messianic hope did not originate with Isaiah or any of the other literary prophets. It was current in Israel long before their time and assumed a great variety of forms. What the literary prophets did was to take this traditional material, purge it of its heathen elements, and give to it a distinctly ethical character. They did not, however, wholly recast it. Some of the older forms were retained. Hence, we should not be surprised if the representations which any particular prophet gives of the future are not all of one and the same piece and do not harmonize perfectly with his other utterances. More or less of diversity under the circumstances is to be expected. And so it is in Isaiah. In some of his Messianic prophecies the personal Messiah is in the foreground; in others he does not appear at all. In some it is a religious com-

munity that seems to be in the prophet's mind; in others it is an organized state with judges and counselors. In some a miraculous transformation of nature is apparently expected; in others a more natural advent of the new order. It is evident from this that Isaiah had no independent and final conception of the new and transformed Israel. One aspect of the traditional hope now appealed to him, and now another. And as each came he gave it poetic expression. The divergent details were to him matters of indifference. The only essential thing was the conviction that Jehovah through the faithful in Israel would work out his own righteous and beneficent purpose in the world.

Some of Isaiah's prophecies of the future, as stated above, represent Israel as a religious community. These may be connected with 8. 16-18, where we read of a band of disciples that gathered about the prophet. It is natural for us to see in this band the nucleus of the remnant that was to be saved in the impending judgment. W. Robertson Smith sees in it also "the birth of the conception of the church, the first step in the emancipation of spiritual religion from the forms of political life." Whether this be correct or not, there can be no doubt that Isaiah, like Hosea, had the ideal conception of the Church of God. His own band of disciples

would naturally suggest it, and so also would his own antimilitary policy. There is, then, no reason why he may not in some exalted moment have attributed to the purified and redeemed people of Israel such a mission as we find in 2. 2-4, one of the sublimest passages of all Scripture. "The mountain of Jehovah's house," he says, "shall be established at the head of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." In general harmony with this picture is also that in 4. 2-6, according to which everyone that is left in Zion is to be called holy, and the striking characteristic of the redeemed city is to be the presence of Jehovah, the Shekinah.

On the other hand, we have in 1. 26 a quite different representation. The restored city, to be sure, is to be a city of righteousness, a faith-

ful city. But the ideal here presented is political and consists in the restoration of the best days of the past. Jehovah after purging the city is to restore her "judges as at the first" and her "counselors as at the beginning." In general harmony with this conception are the later pictures of an ideal king of the Davidic line in 9. 2-7; 11. 1-9; and 32. 1-5. Only this king is to far surpass any king of the past. He is to be endowed in a unique degree with the Spirit of Jehovah, the spirit of wisdom and of might. He is to be called Wonderful Counselor, God-like Hero, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. He is to break the rod of the oppressor, extend the dominion of David, and introduce a reign of perfect righteousness and endless peace. Even the animal world is to share in this transformation. The wild beasts are to lose their predatory instincts, and all animate beings are to live in peace and harmony.

In connection with these passages there is one in chapter 7, which has awakened much discussion and calls for special attention (verses 14-17). This is the famous Immanuel prophecy: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (verse 14). So the English version reads. As is well known, this prophecy is applied in the New Testament (Matt. 1. 23) to the birth of Jesus. But

it is now generally conceded that, while this application was perfectly legitimate from the New Testament point of view, it did not express the strict historical meaning of the passage. The Hebrew word rendered "virgin" might also be translated "young wife." The idea of virginity is not necessarily implied in it. It simply designates a young woman of marriageable age. Then, too, the context makes it evident that an event in the near future is referred to, and not one that took place seven hundred years later. But with this limitation the meaning is still far from clear. The interpretation which is at present perhaps the most widely accepted ascribes no special significance to the child Immanuel. The name means "God-is-with-us," and might be given to any child born at the time of some national victory or of some special good fortune. In this instance the supposed occasion of the giving of the name is the withdrawal of the enemies of Judah, Pekah and Rezin, from Jerusalem. This event will take place within nine months, for the young woman who is to be the mother of Immanuel is already with child. Verse 16 then adds that two or three years later the land of Pekah and Rezin itself will be devastated. In harmony with this, 8. 4 is interpreted as meaning that still sooner, within a year, that is, three months after

the birth of Immanuel, the two northern capitals, Samaria and Damascus, will be captured. But to attribute to Isaiah such a definite chronological scheme is to be untrue to the fluid and poetic character of his mind and to the broad perspective of prophecy in general. Furthermore, the interpretation just given of 7. 14 makes it necessary either to eliminate verses 15 and 17 or to hold that the sign given Ahaz was a double one, verses 14 and 16 promising speedy relief from the northern kings, and verses 15 and 17 predicting that Judah herself would be subjected to a severe chastisement shortly after the fall of the two northern kingdoms. The latter, however, unduly complicates the sign, and the former is in itself improbable. The current interpretation of the passage is, therefore, to be rejected.

It is my opinion that the clause "whose two kings thou abhorrest," in verse 16, is a later scribal addition and that the key to the rest of the passage is to be found in Amos 3. 2 and 5. 18. Just as there was in the eighth century before Christ a popular belief in the election of Israel and in the "day of Jehovah," so there was a popular belief in the coming of a Messiah. According to this popular belief, some well-known young woman, a young wife, or perhaps a virgin, was to bear a son, who was to be called

Immanuel, and who as a mere child was to deliver Israel from her enemies. What Isaiah, then, says in 7. 14 is that this remarkable child is soon to be born. The Messianic era is about to dawn. But instead of bringing deliverance to the people, its coming will be marked by desolation and ruin. The expected Messiah will as a child be compelled to eat the food of privation (verse 15), and the whole land will be devastated (verses 16, 17). Just, then, as Amos took the popular belief in the election of Israel and in the day of Jehovah and turned them against the people, asserting that the election of Israel meant that they would all the more certainly be punished for their sins, and declaring that the day of Jehovah would be a day of darkness, not of light, so Isaiah took the popular belief in a Messiah and turned it against Ahaz and his followers. Immanuel, he said, would indeed come, and more speedily than they expected, but his coming would be attended by a terrible national misfortune instead of the reverse. Just as Amos, however, did not altogether reject the popular belief in the election of Israel and in the day of Jehovah, but gave to them a new moral significance, so Isaiah did not completely repudiate the popular Messianic faith, but gave to it a higher ethical interpretation. The Messianic dawn, he de-

clared, would mean to Ahaz and the unbelieving nation ruin, but to the faithful remnant it would mean the reign of an ideal King in endless peace and perfect righteousness. Immanuel to them would be the true Messiah.

Isaiah, in the light of this, was not the creator of the Messianic hope but its critic. He took the traditional belief, purged it of its selfish nationalism, and made it the vehicle of a lofty idealism. Here it is that the real significance of his visions of the future is to be found. They reveal a clear, strong, and unwavering faith in the ideal and eternal kingdom of righteousness. The particular forms under which he conceived this kingdom, noble as they are, were not final. God had yet greater things in store for the ages to come. But the underlying principle of faith itself has not been superseded. Time and change have had no aging effect upon it. It remains as much as ever the basis and very essence of true religion. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be" (1 John 3. 2), but, with Isaiah, we still look for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11. 10).

CHAPTER V

JEREMIAH THE PROPHET OF PERSONAL PIETY

"The prophetic ideas," says A. B. Davidson, "form but half of the teaching of the prophets; the greater half lies in their own life and personal relation to God." This statement is preeminently true as applied to Jeremiah. The most significant thing about him is not his public message to Israel, but his own personal religious life. As we read his book, what interests and impresses us is not so much the objective prophetic word itself as it is its effect upon himself and upon his relation to God and his fellowmen. It is the reaction of his own nature upon his prophetic office and upon his total environment that forms the most instructive feature of his ministry. No doubt the earlier prophets many of them had had experiences similar to those of Jeremiah. But they had not yet become introspective, had not learned to analyze their own mental states, had not yet formed the habit of reflecting upon their own personal experiences. Their thought was objective; they lost themselves in their message. Not so, however, Jere-

miah. He was by nature a psychologist. What interested him was the things of the heart. It was impossible for him completely to submerge himself in his mission to the nation. However engrossing his public tasks were, he could not overlook the fact that as a prophet he stood in an intimate personal relation to God, and that this relationship was a matter of vital religious concern. The supreme thing in his thought was still the nation and its fate, but along with this went the irrepressible problem of his own personal experiences. The ways of God in them, as well as in the life of the nation, called for explanation.

Jeremiah was the first prophet to raise this question. In him personal religion came to self-consciousness. It is this fact that gives to him his unique significance in the history of religion. The earlier prophets had laid down the essential principles of religion, had made religion a matter of ethics, of holy love, and of moral faith, and had no doubt exemplified these qualities in their own private life. But they did not apparently look upon their own experience of religion as sufficiently important to be worthy of a place in their recorded utterances. Religion with them seems to have been primarily a national affair. It was Jeremiah who first gave to it the personal note. It was he who first

made the soul of the individual the true seat of religion. But this does not mean that he gave up the national point of view. Through all his ministry he continued to address himself to the nation as such. It simply means that he made the conception of religion deeper and more inward. He made its essential nature consist in personal fellowship with God. This implies the ascription of new importance to the individual. It also implies that true religion is not a matter of race, but is as broad as humanity itself. But Jeremiah does not especially concern himself with these implications. He leaves them to be worked out by his two great successors. What he is himself especially interested in is the actual, vital experience of God. And this he finds in himself, in his own soul. He, as Duhm says, "first discovered the soul and its significance for religion."

It is here that Jeremiah's chief contribution to the development of religion is to be found. And this contribution, it is to be borne in mind, was not merely formal in character. It was not merely a new idea let loose among men. It was a new spiritual force, backed up and made vital by a great personality. For Jeremiah not only gave verbal expression to the idea that true piety consists in the fellowship of the individual soul with God. He illustrated it in his own life,

and testified his loyal adherence to it by a long ministry of strife, suffering, and martyrdom. What he then gave to his people was not simply a new and deeper conception of religion, but a noble and inspiring example. Some scholars have seen in Isaiah 53 a picture of him and his sufferings. This is probably incorrect. But it is still true that there is in the whole history of prophecy no figure that has had such power of appeal to the human heart as that of Jeremiah. He does not, to be sure, compare with Isaiah in strength, in brilliancy, in literary power, and in majesty of conception; but in depth of feeling, in insight into human nature, in the power of sympathy, and in the grasp of those truths of religion which most completely meet the common needs of men, he far surpasses him. In these regards he comes nearer than any other Old Testament prophet to the Christian standpoint, and in this sense might be called the greatest of the prophets. In any case, he stands second only to Isaiah.

With reference to Jeremiah's life we are fortunately better informed than with reference to that of any other prophet. This is due partly to his singular habit of self-revelation, and partly to the fact that he had a Boswell. His scribe Baruch, who was with him in Jerusalem (32. 12) and who accompanied him to Egypt

(43. 4-7), seems to have written a biography of his master, which was freely used in the compilation of the present book of Jeremiah.

The prophetic call came to Jeremiah in B. C. 626, the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah. He was then a young man, so that he must have been born about B. C. 650. His home was in Anathoth, a town three miles northeast of Jerusalem. He came from a priestly family and so had probably been trained in the things of God from childhood. Nevertheless, when he received the prophetic call he shrank from it and pleaded his youth as a ground of his inability to undertake so important a task (1. 6). His reluctance at this point suggests, by way of contrast, the readiness of Isaiah. When Jehovah said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Isaiah replied with confidence, "Here am I; send me." This difference between the two men does not argue a greater degree of piety or consecration on the part of either, but simply points to a difference of temperament. Isaiah was strong, self-reliant, equal to any emergency. Jeremiah, on the other hand, was by nature weak, timid, distrustful of his own powers. But this did not unfit him for the prophetic office. "There are," says Paul, "diversities of gifts, but the same spirit." God is able to use the most varied natures in his work. Indeed, the very

weakness of Jeremiah made it possible for God to exhibit in him the special effects of the Spirit's presence in a way that could not have been done in a stronger man. Hence, we have in Jeremiah that remarkable contrast of nature which makes his prophetic career at once so human and so divine. "As man he melts in tears and pines away in sympathy; as the bearer of God's word he is firm and hard like pillar and wall, on which the storm of a nation's wrath breaks in vain" (Orelli).

There are two other points that should also be mentioned in connection with the call of Jeremiah. First, he was predestined for the prophetic office from his birth (1. 5). This is a great conviction for anyone to have, but it was especially significant in the time of Jeremiah. Before his day it was chiefly the nation whose destiny was thought of as directed by Jehovah. Little was said of the individual. Accordingly, it must have been a very impressive thought when it was first brought home to the mind of Jeremiah that even while in his mother's womb Jehovah had set him aside for his life-work. The full import of the idea probably never dawned upon him, nor was he able always to live up to it. But in so far as he understood it and made it his own, it solved for him the problem of life. Secondly, it should be observed

that Jeremiah was called to be a prophet not only to Judah but to the nations (1. 5, 10). This does not mean that he was to go as a missionary to other nations. His ministry was confined to the chosen people quite as much as was that of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. But the prophetic outlook was never limited to Israel (28. 8). The fate of Israel involved that of other nations. This was so in the time of Amos and Isaiah, and it was especially the case in the time of Jeremiah. For in his time Judah had been for a century or more a vassal of Assyria. During this period her history had been simply an episode in the history of the world. It was then inevitable that a prophet to Judah at this time should be a prophet to the nations. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that there was a super-historical, eschatological element in the teaching of the prophets. They dealt not simply with impending events of a national or international character, but with finalities, and finalities that involved not only Israel but the whole world. This is especially clear in the case of Zephaniah, whose prophecy just preceded the call of Jeremiah. Zephaniah depicts in vivid terms the approaching day of Jehovah, a day that means doom not only for the people of Jerusalem but for all mankind. In Jeremiah this eschatological outlook is not so prominent, but

it is by no means lacking. And in its light it is still further evident why his commission embraced not only Israel but the nations.

Jeremiah's ministry, which began in B. C. 626, extended beyond the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586. This closing period of Judah's history was an eventful one both without and within the little kingdom. The year of Jeremiah's prophetic call witnessed the death of the last of the great kings of Assyria. Shortly before this, Assyria had conquered Egypt and attained its greatest extension of power. But after the death of Ashurbanipal it rapidly declined, and in B. C. 606 its proud city Nineveh fell. This sudden decline of Assyria was due in part to an invasion of the Scythians, who, according to Herodotus, terrorized southwestern Asia for twenty-eight years—from B. C. 640 to 612. It was not they, however, but the new Chaldean kingdom that fell heir to what was left of the Assyrian empire at the time of its overthrow. For a while there was a question as to whether Syria and Palestine would fall to Egypt or Babylonia. The Egyptian king Necho had in B. C. 608 taken possession of the territory and was prepared to assert his claim to it. But in 605 he met Nebuchadrezzar at the great battle of Carchemish and was decisively defeated. This gave Syria and Palestine to the new Babylonian em-

pire, in whose power they remained until the capture of Babylon in B. C. 538.

The prophet Nahum welcomed the approaching fall of Nineveh with an exultant song of doom. But events failed to justify his exultation. The decline of Assyria meant eventually for Judah simply a change of masters. Under Josiah a period of independence seems to have been enjoyed, but it was cut short by his sudden and tragic death on the field of Megiddo. He had rashly attempted to stay the eastward advance of Necho, and as a result his own kingdom became a tributary to Egypt. His younger son Jehoahaz, who was proclaimed king by the people, was three months later carried away as a captive, never to return, and in his stead an older son, Jehoiakim, ascended the throne as a vassal of Necho. This subjection to Egypt continued until the battle of Carchemish in B. C. 605, after which there was apparently another brief period of independence. At least Jehoiakim seems not to have paid tribute to Nebuchadrezzar until four or five years later (2 Kings 24. 1). He himself would probably have been quite willing to continue in a tributary relationship, but the people, who had so recently tasted the joys of freedom and were, furthermore, inflamed by religious fanaticism, were not disposed to brook again a foreign yoke. So in B. C. 597,

after paying tribute three years, they revolted. Before the Babylonian army could reach Jerusalem Jehoiakim died, and was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin. Jehoiachin after a reign of three months surrendered to Nebuchadrezzar, and was carried as a captive to Babylon along with the flower of the nation. After such a catastrophe it might naturally be supposed that the spirit of the people would have been broken. But it did not so turn out. The same passionate, fanatical longing for independence asserted itself under the new king Zedekiah, and finally led to another revolt which resulted in the capture and destruction of Jerusalem in B. C. 586.

Such were the troublous times in which Jeremiah lived—times that tried men's souls. Let us now trace the prophet's own fortunes through them. His ministry may naturally be divided into three periods, that under Josiah (B. C. 626-608), that under Jehoiakim (B. C. 608-597), and that under Zedekiah (B. C. 597-586). The reign of Josiah was a comparatively quiet one. When Jeremiah began his prophetic ministry there was imminent danger that the country would be overrun by the dreaded Scythians. Jeremiah himself confidently expected and predicted it (5. 15ff.; 6. 22ff.). Indeed, it was this danger that apparently gave such urgency to his earlier discourses as they are preserved

for us in the so-called Scythian Songs of chapters two to six. But in spite of the prophet's predictions this particular peril failed to materialize. The Scythians, as they moved southward toward Egypt in B. C. 623-622, left Judah unmolested. As this apparently contradicted the plain words of the young prophet, one naturally wonders what effect it had upon him. Some think the failure of his prediction to come true was a severe blow both to him personally and to his standing as a prophet. In this way they account for the fact, that he was not consulted in connection with the new Law-book discovered in B. C. 621, and for the further fact, that for a number of years subsequently, from B. C. 621 to 608, we apparently have no prophecies from him. He was, it is thought, discredited in the eyes of others and struck dumb by the contradiction which his preaching had received. But it is very doubtful if this was the case. It is quite possible to account for his long silence, and also for his failure to be consulted with reference to the newly found book of the Law on other grounds. At the time the book of the law was found he may have been absent from the city, and hence the prophetess Hulda was consulted instead. Then, again, he may have looked upon the Deuteronomic reform as temporarily at least averting the doom

he had pronounced upon the nation, and hence may have waited in silence through the rest of Josiah's reign to see what its actual effect upon the people would be. Or it may be that after the Scythian storm had blown over, a period of comparative quiet set in, which gave the prophet no occasion for any special message of alarm. In any case, we find that after the death of Josiah he resumed his prophetic activity, and in B. C. 604 reproduced and published his earlier Scythian discourses without any apparent feeling that they had been contradicted by the course of events. Indeed, the very fact of their publication at this later date implies the direct contrary. Evidently, Jeremiah distinguished between the incidental and the essential elements in his message. His original prophecy of doom had not been fulfilled by the Scythians, as he had expected. But this was a minor matter. There was an essential truth in the prophecy, and now, he says in B. C. 604, it will be fulfilled by the Babylonians. It is hardly probable, then, that the failure of the Scythians to overrun the land of Judah affected at all seriously either Jeremiah himself or his prophetic standing.

Jeremiah's relation, however, to the Deuteronomic reform, which was the great outstanding event of Josiah's reign, calls for further consideration. On this point there is wide

diversity of opinion among scholars. Some take their cue from Jer. 11. 1-14, and hold that Jeremiah not only did not oppose but actively supported the Deuteronomic program. Others find the key to the question in Jer. 8. 8, and conclude that he was hostile to the whole movement, attributing the new law to "the false pen of the scribes" which "hath wrought falsely." But both of these views are extreme. It is incredible that Jeremiah should have characterized the Deuteronomic law as "false." Jer. 8. 8 must refer to some scribal expansion or perversion of the law. For with a large part of Deuteronomy Jeremiah was manifestly in accord. He could not help but sympathize with its passionate devotion to Jehovah and its tender regard for the poor and the needy. In two instances also he seems to refer approvingly to its regulations (11. 1ff.; 34. 13ff.). Then, too, he could hardly have spoken in such warm terms of appreciation of Josiah (22. 15, 16), if he had regarded the king's most important administrative act as due to the "false pen of the scribes."

On the other hand, it is highly improbable that Jeremiah ever gave to the Deuteronomic law his unqualified approval. There was much that was good in it, and this he indorsed; but no legislative reform could meet the demands of the situation. What was needed was a rad-

ical change of heart (4. 3, 4). Nothing short of this could avert the impending doom. In Deuteronomy there is also a stress on ritual which seems hardly in harmony with the teaching of Jeremiah. He took the same attitude toward the cultus as his great predecessors of the eighth century. "To what purpose," he says, as the spokesman of Jehovah, "cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me" (6. 20). And again: "Add your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh! For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices" (7. 21f.). Such statements as these manifestly represent a different standpoint from that of Deuteronomy. Furthermore, it soon became clear that the Deuteronomic centralization of worship, desirable as it no doubt was from some points of view, carried with it its own peril. It gradually led to a superstitious trust in the temple. In hours of danger the people would crowd into its courts, crying, "The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these" (7. 4), as though Jehovah must needs protect those in his temple regardless of their character.

They made, said the prophet, of the house of Jehovah a den of robbers, to which they would flee for safety whenever their own sins brought them into danger (7. 11). In view of such tendencies to externalism in the Deuteronomic reform, it is not likely that Jeremiah was ever fully satisfied with it. "It was good in its way," as A. B. Davidson says, "but it was not the good which he and men like him desired to see and required." Some scholars consequently regard Jer. 11. 1-14 as a later addition to the book, and others think the prophet was here speaking, not of the Deuteronomic, but the Sinaitic covenant. The most probable view is that the passage refers to Deuteronomy, but that it has been to some extent worked over by later hands so as to imply on the prophet's part a more complete indorsement of the Deuteronomic reform than was originally intended.

The second period of Jeremiah's ministry began with the death of Josiah and the accession of Jekoiakim. The latter was a very different type of man from his father. He lacked religious interest and had no proper appreciation of the duties of a king. Whether or not his example was responsible for it, we have at the beginning of his reign a recrudescence of heathenism and immorality. It was apparently this fact, together with the new disturbances in the

political world, that stirred the prophet again to action. First came the twice-reported temple-discourse (chapters 7 and 26), in which he predicted that the temple would be destroyed like Shiloh of old. This prediction struck the priests and prophets as nothing short of blasphemous. They, therefore, brought capital charges against him. But some of the elders recalled that a similar prediction had been made by the prophet Micah a century earlier, and that *he* had been treated very differently by Hezekiah the king. Then, too, Jeremiah had the powerful support of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, so that he escaped with his life. But how real the danger was is clear from the fact that a like-minded prophet, Uriah, was put to death by the king because he had delivered a similar message of doom against the city and the land (26. 20-23).

This experience, however, did not intimidate Jeremiah. A year or two later—the exact date is not known—he repeated his offense by declaring again in the temple court that the city would be destroyed (19. 1 to 20. 6). This time he was scourged and put in the stocks over night by Pashhur, "the chief officer in the house of Jehovah." Undismayed by such treatment, he boldly announced to Pashhur that he and his whole house would go into captivity. As a penalty probably for this act of defiance, he was

denied the privilege of admission to the temple court (36. 5). He, therefore, resolutely determined to reach the ear of the people by the written word. So in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, he dictated to his scribe Baruch all the prophecies he had delivered up to that time, and commissioned him to read them to the people at the next public fast, when it might be supposed they would be in a serious frame of mind (chapter 36). This event awakened great interest. Baruch was required to read the prophecies a second time before a company of princes, and then the roll was taken to the king. He cut it up, three or four columns at a time, as it was read to him and threw it into the fire; after which he ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch. "But Jehovah," we read, "hid them" (36. 26). A new copy of the prophecies was then prepared, containing not only all the words in the previous roll but also in addition "many like words," among them a terrible woe upon Jehoiakim himself (22. 13-19).

How long Jeremiah remained in concealment we do not know. Some think it was through all the rest of Jehoiakim's reign. It has even been suggested that he left the country and did not return until the king's death. But there is nowhere any indication of this, and it is probable that after a while the king's wrath cooled off.

Anyhow, there are a number of incidents in the prophet's life which may naturally be referred to the latter part of Jehoiakim's reign, such as the plot against his life by his own townsmen (11. 18-21), and the attempts to entrap him in his speech (18. 18f.; 20. 10).

The third period in the prophet's ministry covered the reign of Zedekiah (B. C. 597-586). The best part of the nation had now been carried into captivity. They were the good figs; those at home were the bad figs (chapter 24). Still, even among the captives in Babylon false hopes were entertained. Jeremiah consequently wrote them a letter, bidding them prepare for a long captivity (chapter 29). In Jerusalem, he steadily opposed the spirit of rebellion, counseling submission to Babylon. This brought him in B. C. 594 into conflict with the false prophet Hananiah (chapters 27, 28). Hananiah prophesied that in two years the yoke of Nebuchadrezzar would be broken from off the neck of all the nations. This prophecy Jeremiah denounced as false, and, as a penalty for uttering it, declared that Hananiah would die within a year—a prediction that was fulfilled two months later. When the final rebellion came, in B. C. 587, Jeremiah's attitude toward it was still the same. Time and again he declared that the one way of safety was to submit to the Babylonian king

(21. 1-10; 38. 2, 18). If they failed to do this, certain destruction awaited the city (37. 3-10; 38. 21-23). Such speech naturally awakened the hostility of the war party. As a result, Jeremiah was arrested on a false charge of deserting to the enemy and put into prison. Transferred from the house of Jonathan, where he was first confined, to the court of the guard, he continued his counsel of submission to the people who came to see him. This so angered the nobles that they thrust him into a slimy cistern, where he would soon have died had he not been rescued by Ebed-melek, the Ethiopian. Restored again to the court of the guard, he remained there till the capture of the city. After its fall he threw in his lot with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, and settled at the new capital, Mizpah, where he continued to live until the new governor was assassinated. After this, in spite of his opposition, he was carried into Egypt by his frightened countrymen. There he renewed his denunciation of them for their idolatry, and finally, tradition says, met his death at their hands. So to the end he remained, against his will, a man of strife.

With this survey of the life and times of Jeremiah in mind, we pass now to a more intimate and more systematic study of his teaching.

The book of Jeremiah is the longest of the prophetic books and one of the most poorly arranged. It is also the only one that gives an account of its origin. In chapter 36, as we have already seen, we are told how Jeremiah in the twenty-second year of his ministry dictated to Baruch all the prophecies he had delivered up to that time. This roll was destroyed by the king the next year, and then another was prepared containing in addition "many like words." At subsequent times other additions were no doubt made by the prophet (30. 1, 2), so that the book grew up without any definite plan. The later scribes rearranged the material and added not a little from Baruch's memoirs and other sources. As at present arranged, the book may be divided into four unequal divisions. Chapters 1 to 25 contain prophetic discourses chiefly in the first person. Chapters 26 to 45 are made up for the most part of the reminiscences of Baruch. Chapters 46 to 51 are a group of oracles against the heathen, and chapter 52 is an historical appendix taken largely from Second Kings. There is considerable difference of opinion as to how extensive the later scribal additions to the book were. Of the approximately one thousand three hundred and fifty verses, Duhm attributes only about two hundred and eighty to Jeremiah, two hundred

and twenty to Baruch, and the remaining eight hundred and fifty to later editors. This, however, is a very extreme view, and rests upon the unwarranted assumption that Jeremiah wrote only poetry, and poetry of one definite measure. Most scholars assign very much less to later hands. But that considerable additions to the book were made in later times is generally admitted; and this fact must be borne in mind in any critical estimate of the prophet's teaching.

As we read the book of Jeremiah, we are first of all impressed, as we were in our study of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, with the prominence of the message of doom. Jeremiah's commission at the outset was "to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow" (1. 10). And to this commission he remained true throughout his whole ministry. Even after the predicted doom had fallen upon the nation, he continued his denunciation of the exiles in Egypt, as though he believed in a kind of punishment after death (chapter 44). It was, he declared, characteristic of the true prophet to prophesy "of war, and of evil, and of pestilence" (28. 8). By this he meant that true prophecy was moral in its character and must therefore manifest itself in the condemnation of a wicked people. Indeed, this very attitude toward Israel on the part of a prophet attested

the truth of his message. It was only prophecies of peace to a sinful nation that required verification by the event (28. 9).

At first it was the Scythians who were to bring destruction upon Judah, later the Babylonians. But Jeremiah did not reckon simply with historical forces. The real agent in the punishment of Judah was Jehovah, and it was possible for him to execute his will in a great variety of ways. In one of the most powerful passages of the whole book, Jeremiah represents the approaching desolation as a return to the state of chaos:

I beheld the earth, and, lo,
It was waste and void;
And the heavens, and they had no light.

I beheld the mountains, and, lo,
They trembled,
And all the hills moved to and fro.

I beheld, and, lo,
There was no man,
And all the birds of the heaven were fled.

I beheld, and, lo,
The fruitful field was a wilderness,
And all the cities were broken down at the presence of Jehovah (4. 23-26).

In another brief but masterful poem he depicts the coming doom as due to pestilence.

Death is come up into our windows,
It is entered into our palaces;
To cut off the children from without,
The young men from the streets.

The corpses of men shall fall
Upon the open field,
As sheaves after the harvestman,
And none shall gather them (9. 21f.).

In another case he represents the people as suddenly overtaken by a storm which enshrouds them in darkness.

Give glory to Jehovah your God,
Before he cause darkness,
And before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains,
And, while ye look for light,
He turn it into the shadow of death
And make it gross darkness (13. 16).

"Only a master of the first rank," says Duhm, "could select just this moment before the storm, and in two lines [in the Hebrew] perfectly depict it and then—stop." But these are only illustrations of the great variety of forms under which Jeremiah describes the approaching doom. The historical situation he has in mind is the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of a foreign foe. But attached to this idea, and supplementing it, are many other ideas of doom, among them the conception, more or less definite, of an approaching world-judgment, a marvelous

event or series of events, which is to inaugurate a new era in the history of the world (chapters 25, and 46 to 51).

The ground of Jeremiah's message of doom was essentially the same as that of the earlier prophets. Social and moral conditions had not changed much since the close of the eighth century. It happens that Jeremiah does not lay so much stress on the injustice and oppression of the rich as did Amos and Isaiah, nor does he dwell on the unchastity of the people the way Hosea did. But his condemnation of the general wickedness of his day is very similar to theirs. "The sin of Judah," he says, "is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond it is graven upon the tablet of their heart" (17. 1). The particular evil he emphasizes is that of deceit (5. 1ff.; 9. 2ff.). Perhaps his own transparent sincerity of soul made this sin especially offensive to him. Religiously the Deuteronomic reform effected a marked outward change. Before it was introduced, conditions seem to have been even worse than a century earlier. During the reactionary reign of Manasseh, new evils had grown up, such as the worship of the host of heaven; and old evils, such as human sacrifice, had been revived (2. Kings 21. 6). This state of affairs is clearly reflected in the dis-

courses from the earliest part of Jeremiah's ministry (chapters 2 to 6). The current religious evils are there denounced in terms very similar to those found in Hosea. The reform of B. C. 621 put an end to many of these evils. But in their stead there arose a new type of formalism, a superstitious trust in the temple (chapter 7), and also a self-confident nationalism disguising itself in the cloak of piety (chapter 28). The real inner attitude of the people, therefore, toward Jehovah was not seriously altered by the Deuteronomic reform, and after the death of Josiah some at least of the earlier heathen practices were revived (7. 31; 13. 27). It is evident, then, that there was abundant ground for the prophet's message of doom.

Hosea and Isaiah had traced the sin of Israel back to a deeper principle, Hosea finding it in disloyalty to Jehovah and Isaiah in unbelief. In Jeremiah it is not so much any one principle that is the source of sin as it is the heart itself. Man is not, according to Jeremiah, by nature sinful. He is made for God. What instinct is to the birds of passage that religion is to man (8. 7). It is the deepest impulse of his being. What Tertullian meant when he said that the human heart is naturally Christian was already clearly apprehended by Jeremiah. That Israel should forget Jehovah seemed to him a thing contrary

to the order of nature (2. 32; 18. 14f.). But while the native bent of the human mind is thus toward God, man is naturally weak and is easily led astray. As he persists in sin, he develops a love for it and cherishes it (5. 31; 14. 10). He does not generate evil out of his own nature as a well casts forth water, but he harbors it just as a cistern keeps fresh and cool the water that has come into it from without (6. 7). And so gradually his heart becomes diseased (17. 9). It takes on a stubbornness foreign to its original constitution (7. 24; 9. 14; 23. 17), until eventually sin becomes a kind of second nature to man, which he can no more change than an Ethiopian can his skin or a leopard his spots (13. 23).

Such was the condition of the people of Israel as Jeremiah found them. If they were to meet the demands of Jehovah, they must manifestly undergo a radical change of character. Hence, the prophet says: "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to Jehovah, and take away the foreskins of your heart" (4. 3, 4). This was not an act that lay within their own power. "I know," says the prophet, "that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (10. 23). But the help of Jehovah was always near. He stood in an especially close relationship to the soul of man. In-

deed, it was his peculiar function to try the heart and the mind (11. 20; 17. 10; 20. 12). He was ever ready to heal the backslidings of his wayward children (3. 22). The prophet, therefore, in his eager desire for their conversion, could at times almost hear the penitent people on the bare heights, weeping and making supplication unto Jehovah, saying, "Behold, we are come unto thee; for thou art Jehovah our God" (3. 21f.). Even exiled Ephraim he could hear in spirit bemoaning himself as a prodigal and saying unto Jehovah: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned" (31. 18f.). But these ardent hopes were not destined to be realized by the prophet. The people refused the help offered. They would not take of the balm of Gilead (8. 22). They persisted in their stubbornness of heart, and so went down into ruin.

In view of these facts it was inevitable that Jeremiah's message should be one mainly of doom. But it was by no means merely this. It had also its element of hope. At the beginning of his ministry the prophet had not only received the commission "to destroy and to overthrow," but also "to build and to plant." By his profound conception of sin and clear insight into the need of regeneration, which we have just been considering, he was, as a matter of fact, building and planting better than he knew. But

it is not to building and planting of this kind that his commission refers. It refers to nations and kingdoms, and especially to the kingdom of Israel. The destruction of Jerusalem was far from being the last word of the prophet. Throughout his whole ministry he entertained the hope of the restoration of the exiled people. Now and then, as we have seen, he apparently cherished the idea that Judah would repent and escape exile altogether. But this was only a temporary expectation in which the wish was father to the thought. For him, as a rule, the exile of Judah was certain. But just as certain was her restoration from exile after a period of seventy years (25. 12; 29. 10). And not only was Judah to be restored, but also Ephraim (31. 4-6). An interesting practical expression of the prophet's faith in the future of the land was furnished while he was confined in the court of the guard during the siege of the city by the Babylonians (32. 6-15). A cousin came and asked him to buy a field in Anathoth, which was at that time probably occupied by the enemy. Jeremiah at once saw in this request an indication of the gracious purpose of Jehovah, and so bought the field. "For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land" (32. 15).

In his conception of the future, Jeremiah shared the common view of the prophets that there was to be a marvelous interposition of Jehovah resulting in the establishment of a new order (chapters 30 to 33). But in his representation of this new order, two new and significant elements are introduced. The first relates to the Davidic king. He is to bear the name, "Jehovah our righteousness" (23. 5, 6). This means not only that he is to be a righteous king, but also that he is to be a moral and spiritual redeemer of his people. Through him Jehovah is to make his people righteous. We have here an anticipation of the righteous servant of Isaiah 53, who is to "justify many." The second new element is found in the conception of a new covenant between Jehovah and his people (31. 31-34). "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it. . . . And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah." This is one of the profoundest and most significant utterances in the whole Old Testament. It contains the quintessence of the whole theology of Jeremiah. Henceforth, in

the new covenant, the law is to be inwardly and individually appropriated. Religion, in a word, is to be a matter of the heart. And if so, it can recognize no limits of race. It must be as broad as humanity itself. It is, then, no surprise to find Jeremiah representing the nations as coming from the ends of the earth and saying, "Our fathers have inherited naught but lies, even vanity and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make unto himself gods, which yet are no gods?" (16. 19, 20). It is also no surprise to find him enunciating the doctrine of individualism, which is the correlate of universalism. In the better days to come, the children of Israel, he declares, will no more say, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge" (31. 29f). These ideas, however, he did not himself elaborate and insist upon. The execution of this task he left to those who came after him. It is his distinction to occupy the middle point in the history of prophecy. The great truths of religion, uttered by Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, came to a focus in him by being made inward and personal. He then, in turn, by his conception of the inwardness of religion, became the starting point of a new development, lead-

ing to the individualism of Ezekiel and the universalism of Deutero-Isaiah.

But the most interesting aspect of Jeremiah's teaching remains yet to be considered. This is found in the revelations he has given us of his own feelings and inward experiences. The message of doom, which he was commissioned to deliver, was by no means one that gave him any pleasure. At times he seems to have been completely overwhelmed by it. Especially was this true in the earlier part of his ministry. He cries out, for instance, in 4. 19-21:

My anguish, my anguish!
I am pained at my very heart;
My heart is tumultuous within me,
I cannot hold my peace;
Because my soul hath heard the sound of the trumpet,
The alarm of war.

Destruction succeeds destruction,
For the whole land is laid waste:
Suddenly are my tents destroyed,
And my curtains in a moment.
How long shall I see the standard,
And hear the voice of the trumpet?

And again in 8. 18 and 9. 1:

Incurable is my sorrow,
My heart is faint within me. . . .
Oh that my head were waters,
And mine eyes a fountain of tears,
That I might weep day and night
For the slain of the daughter of my people.

But not only did his message of doom cause his own soul intense sorrow. It awakened opposition on the part of his fellow men generally, and estranged them from him. This added new bitterness to his experience, for he was himself by nature social. He loved the society of others. He looked with pleasure upon the natural joys of life. The children in the street and the young men in the market place were to him special objects of sympathy and interest (6. 11; 9. 21). Time and again he speaks of "the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride" (7. 34; 16. 9; 25. 10; 33. 11). But, however much his own nature was drawn toward these joyful aspects of life, he was not permitted to share in them. "I sat not," he says to Jehovah, "in the assembly of them that make merry, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation" (15. 17). It was probably for the same reason also that he was denied the comforts of a home (16. 2). Consequently, he felt himself cut off from his fellow men, condemned to isolation.

But not only did men treat him with coldness. They were openly hostile to him and sought to accomplish his ruin. Some of the more serious experiences that came to him, as a result of this hostility, have already been spoken of. Here we

need mention only the efforts to entrap him in his speech (18. 18f.; 20. 10), and the general persecution and reproach that he suffered (20. 7f.; 15. 15). Apart altogether from the danger involved in the hostile attitude of the people about him, it was almost intolerable to a man of his sensitive nature to live in such an unfriendly atmosphere. Some one has said that observation without sympathy is torture. And so it was with Jeremiah. He felt that he was under the constant surveillance of hostile eyes, and this caused him the keenest distress. Then, too, he was by nature a man of peace (4. 10; 6. 14; 8. 11; 14. 13; 23. 17; 29. 7). Strife ran contrary to the grain of his being. Because of this it was a perpetual source of pain to him to be involved in conflict with those about him. Now and then he seems to have been able to rise above his troubles and take them less seriously. For instance, he says, on one occasion, with a trace of humor: "I have not lent, neither have men lent to me; yet every one of them doth curse me" (15. 10). But, as a rule, his own sufferings weighed heavily upon him. "Woe is me, my mother," he cries, "that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth" (15. 10). And at another time, he goes so far as to curse the day he was born (20. 14-18). "Wherefore," he says, "came I

forth out of the womb to see labor and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?" In estimating such an utterance as this, it is to be borne in mind that Jeremiah did not have the hope of a life hereafter to comfort him, nor did he have the consolation of the belief that his own suffering might be vicarious in character, a blessing to others. His misery was simply a blind, dumb fact.

It was, furthermore, aggravated by two considerations. First, the prophet had interceded for the people with Jehovah, had striven to turn away his wrath from them (18. 20), and now they reward him by plotting against him and persecuting him. This was so manifestly unjust that it rankled in his soul and led him to cry out for vengeance upon his enemies (15. 15). Secondly, he had been called to the prophetic office by Jehovah, and hence felt that he had a right to expect his protection; but instead he was exposed to constant reproach and peril of life. Indeed, the more faithfully he performed his duties as a prophet, the greater was the danger and suffering he incurred. It seemed to him, therefore, at times, as though not only men but God himself had conspired against him.

Under these circumstances, it naturally occurred to him that relief might be secured by ceasing to prophesy. But "if I say, I will not

make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and cannot contain" (20. 9). So, with persecution from without, a burning fire within, and an apparently unsympathetic God above, he was jostled hither and thither until, in desperation, he cried out: "O Jehovah, thou hast enticed me, and I was enticed; thou art stronger than I, and hast coerced me.... Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou in deed be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail?" (20. 7; 15. 18). Such an outcry was natural enough under the circumstances, but it was far from what one would expect from a prophet of the Most High. And so Jehovah turns to him and says: "If thou wilt return, then will I restore thee, that thou mayest stand before me; and if thou bring forth the precious without the vile, thou mayest be as my mouth" (15. 19).

This is one of the most remarkable utterances in the whole book. Nowhere else do we get such an insight into the heart of Jeremiah and into the essence of his teaching as here. Jehovah, it is to be observed, in his response to the prophet says nothing about his sufferings. He has no word of sympathy for him in his trials.

These, he assumes, are to be met and manfully borne. On the other hand, he regards the prophet's complaints as equivalent to apostasy. By uttering them he has backslidden. So Jehovah here offers him the privilege of restoration to his prophetic office. The condition of this restoration is simply this, that he bring forth the precious without the vile. The vile was the prophet's complaining, with all that it implied; the precious was his sense of fellowship with God, with all that it involved. We have in this utterance of Jehovah the prophet's higher nature asserting itself. In his best moments he realized that there was nothing in life that could compare with fellowship with God. Whatever suffering it might incidentally entail, it was still the chief good of life. It was not always possible for him to keep himself up to this high pitch. The lower part of his nature not infrequently broke out in rebellion against what seemed his unjust lot. But in such hours, realizing his need, he turned his face upward and said: "Heal me, O Jehovah, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for . . . thou art my refuge in the day of evil" (17. 14, 17). And so through prayer he found rest unto his soul (6. 16), and entered into peace, that peace which the world could not give.

In this experience of the prophet and in his

conception of the new covenant, we have the high point of Old Testament prophecy. Nowhere else do we have so close an approach to the New Testament standard. For this reason it is not surprising that when, six centuries later, Jesus asked whom the people thought him to be, he was told that some said he was Jeremiah (Matt. 16. 14); and also not surprising that when at the Last Supper he took the cup and passed it to his disciples, he borrowed a term from Jeremiah and called it "the new covenant" in his blood (Luke 22. 20).

CHAPTER VI

EZEKIEL THE PROPHET OF INDIVIDUALISM

As we pass from the book of Jeremiah to that of Ezekiel we are aware of a marked change. We are still in the realm of prophetic thought, but it is no longer prophetic thought in its purity. A new element entered into the work of Ezekiel. He was priest as well as prophet. Not only was he the son of a priest, as was Jeremiah, but by training and native endowment he had the tastes and interests of a priest (4. 14). In his book, therefore, we find no such polemic against ceremonialism as in the other prophets whom we have studied. He places ritual offenses alongside of the moral (22. 6-16), and in the concluding chapters of the book (40 to 48) gives elaborate instructions with reference to the construction of the temple and the externals of religion. In taking this attitude toward rites and ceremonies, Ezekiel was following out a line of development already begun by Deuteronomy. It was his conviction, as it was that of the authors of Deuteronomy, that the best way to promote the interests of true religion

was not to repudiate the sacrificial cult altogether, but to moralize it and make it a medium for the expression of religious truth. And in this conviction he was justified by the course of history. His own sketch of priestly law stimulated other like endeavors, until eventually an elaborate ritual code was introduced by Ezra and Nehemiah and made the law of the land. It is, then, proper to speak of him as "the father of Judaism."

In this aspect of Ezekiel's work it has been customary to see a decline from the heights of earlier prophetic teaching. And in the abstract this is no doubt true. Ritual, in and of itself, is no necessary part of genuine religion. On the contrary, it frequently carries with it much that is materialistic and unspiritual. But over against this, it should be borne in mind that there are many nonessential things in religion that are essential in order to make religion effective in the world. These nonessentials vary from age to age. But they exist in every age. And it is an evidence of true religious statesmanship to be able to single them out and make them the efficient means of religious culture. This power and insight Ezekiel possessed; and it was because he possessed it, and because his work was carried on by other men, such as Ezra and Nehemiah, that Old Testament religion was made

strong enough to resist the encroachments of Greek naturalism.

In the course of its history the religion of Israel was forced to face two great crises. The first was caused by the fall of Jerusalem in B. C. 586. This disaster threatened the popular faith in the power of Jehovah. Whenever any other ancient nation fell, the people, as Isaiah says, threw their gods to the moles and the bats, thinking they had been conquered by superior deities. And this would have taken place in Israel also, had it not been for the work of the prophets. These inspired men, before the fall of the nation, moralized and universalized the conception of Jehovah. They declared it was he, and not his enemies, who was about to destroy the city. There was nothing, then, in the fall of Jerusalem that needed to weaken faith in him; rather did this event furnish new ground for trust in him. Thus the spiritually minded in Israel reasoned, and in this way it came about that the Israelitic religion survived its own nation's downfall—the only instance of the kind in the history of the world. The second crisis above referred to was brought about by the disintegrating influence of Greek culture. After the conquests of Alexander the spread of Hellenism threatened to dissolve away everything that was characteristic of Hebrew be-

lief. Every other religion in southwestern Asia succumbed to Greek naturalism; and this would in all probability have been the fate of Judaism had it not been for the impenetrable armor of legalism in which Ezekiel and Ezra had encased it. What saved Israelitic religion from falling a prey to Greek thought and arms was the fact that it had been crystallized into law by the priests, and so had been rendered "hard as steel and strong as iron." It was, then, a service of the utmost importance to biblical religion that Ezekiel performed when, toward the close of his life (40. 1), he worked out a new priestly constitution for restored Israel.

But it is not the priestly side of Ezekiel's activity in which we are at present primarily interested. Our special subject of study is his work as a prophet. And here what above all else distinguishes him from the rest of the prophets is his doctrine of individualism. We have already seen that Jeremiah made religion a personal matter, an affair of the soul. We have also seen that his own personal experiences as a prophet constituted for him a problem. He raised the question as to why the wicked prosper (12. 1), and struggled with God in an effort to harmonize the sufferings and persecution to which he was subject with his own lofty calling. But he did not take up the general problem of

individualism. It lay very near to his circle of ideas to do so, but the conditions under which his ministry was carried on led him to pass it by. It was Ezekiel who first asserted the rights of the individual. In so doing he did not give up the old message of national doom. He reaffirmed it again and again down to the very fall of Jerusalem. But in the impending doom he insisted that every individual would be judged by his own moral condition. No person would be punished for the sins of his father or for the sins of his son. Everyone would stand on his own merits, and on his own merits at the time when the doom came. This doctrine manifestly marked an important step forward in religious thought. It meant an increased moralization of religion. It meant an increased sense of personal responsibility. It meant that hereafter the individual would gradually supplant the nation as the unit of value in religion. This line of development was in some regards even more important than that of the law. Ezekiel, therefore, in his double capacity as prophet and priest occupies a very significant place in the history of Old Testament religion. H. P. Smith hardly overshoots the mark when he says that, "taking him all in all," he is "the most influential man that we find in the whole course of Hebrew history."

Of the life of Ezekiel we know comparatively little. His father was a priest. He himself was carried into captivity along with Jehoiachin in B. C. 597. He settled at Tel-abib, on the banks of the river Chebar, probably a canal connecting Babylon with Nippur. He was married (24. 18), and occupied his own house (3. 24; 12. 3), where he seems to have been frequently visited by the elders (8. 1; 14. 1; 20. 1). His wife died suddenly shortly before the fall of Jerusalem, and her death was used as a symbol to enforce the prophet's message of doom. He himself did not on this occasion observe the usual mourning customs, and this abstention on his part was declared to be a sign of the stupefaction which would overtake the people when they heard of the capture of their sacred city (24. 15-24). The fall of Jerusalem wrought a sudden change in the content of the prophet's message. Previously it had been predominantly one of doom; hereafter it became almost exclusively one of consolation. How long this latter part of his ministry continued we do not know. The last date mentioned in his book is B. C. 570, and it is not improbable that he died shortly thereafter.

Ezekiel's call to the prophetic office came in the fifth year of his captivity (B. C. 592). It took with him, as with the prophets generally,

the form of a vision. This vision is described at length in chapters 1 to 3. In reading these chapters we are impressed with the contrast which they present to the account of Isaiah's call (chapter 6). Isaiah, with a few strokes, sets the whole scene before us. Ezekiel, on the other hand, goes into elaborate detail, describing the minutest features of the vision. This literary method meets us not only here, but in various parts of the book. It reappears in the vision of chapters 8 to 11. It is found in the allegory of the foundling child who became the faithless wife of her benefactor (chapter 16), and in the story of the two adulterous women, Oholah and Oholibah (chapter 23). It is also illustrated in the vision of the restored temple (chapters 40 to 43). Indeed, it is characteristic of Ezekiel's type of mind. He has a wonderful capacity for grand and impressive conceptions (compare 27; 32. 17-32; 37), but this is coupled with a singular interest in mathematical calculation and minuteness of detail. Some minds see in this combination evidence of remarkable mental ability. To an extraordinary degree it exhibits, they think, sustained power of imagination and clearness and steadiness of vision. Victor Hugo, for instance, places Ezekiel along with Homer and Aeschylus in the "avenue of the immovable giants of the human

mind." But this is a judgment in which most people would find it difficult to concur. The average person has the feeling that Ezekiel's habit of detailed elaboration interferes with the impressiveness of his thought. It complicates his images so that the general conceptions that lie back of them are often lost from view. Such is the case, to some extent at least, with his inaugural vision. The result is that people, as a rule, find the simplicity of Isaiah 6 far more impressive than the complex elaboration of Ezekiel 1.

The underlying idea of Ezekiel's vision is essentially the same as that of Isaiah's. And the general outline of his imagery is a not unworthy embodiment of his thought. Jehovah is represented as coming in a stormcloud out of the north, borne by a wonderful chariot, which, by virtue of the power of the spirit in its wheels and living creatures, moves hither and thither, upward and downward. Above the heads of the living creatures is a crystal dome; on the dome is a throne with Jehovah in shining human form seated upon it; and round about the throne is a brightness like that of the rainbow. What is suggested by this imagery is the greatness of God. He sits upon the throne of the universe; he rules everything. He moves upon the wings of the wind; he is everywhere present. The

rims of his chariot wheels are full of eyes (1. 18); they see everything; and so nothing escapes his all-seeing eye. No wonder that the prophet, as he beheld this wonderful theophany with all its symbolic significance, fell upon his face (1. 28). And no wonder that the Spirit must first enter into him before he could again stand upon his feet (2. 2). In the presence of this august manifestation he was himself simply a "son of man." This term of address is used one hundred and sixteen times in the book of Ezekiel, and always by Jehovah. It expresses the weakness and humility of the prophet as over against God.

In Ezekiel's thought the one great fact of the universe was God. Everything existed for him and through him. In the impending doom of Israel and in the approaching overthrow of the nations of the world, he was the one being that was to abide. Indeed, the whole course of human history was being so conducted that men would come to "know that I am Jehovah," the One who is and who persists (compare Exod. 3. 13-15). This expression occurs no less than fifty-six times in the book of Ezekiel, and forms the unifying principle of the prophet's whole conception of history. Everything is done out of regard for Jehovah's holy name. His name may not be profaned. It was because Israel

had profaned it by her sins that she was carried into captivity, and it was because the heathen nations profaned it by attributing the exile of Israel to the weakness of Jehovah that she was to be restored (36. 16ff.). The fate likewise of the heathen peoples was to be determined by their attitude toward Jehovah and his people (chapters 25 to 32). His sovereign will was the one controlling factor in human history. Everything that raised itself in pride against him was to be crushed to the earth (28. 2ff.; 29. 3). This idea had already been expressed by Isaiah (2. 10ff.), but in Ezekiel it received a more absolute and complete expression. His whole teaching was dominated by it. His thought was theocentric throughout.

This idea of the absolute sovereignty of God naturally imposed upon the prophet himself the obligation of complete submission to the divine will. We find, therefore, with him no such struggles with God, no such complaints against his environment, as in the life of Jeremiah. In only one instance does he distinctly shrink from obeying a divine command (4. 14); and this is in a symbolical action which was probably not intended to be literally carried out. It may also be added that the command in this case was modified so as to be less offensive to the prophet's nature. Obedience to the divine will had ap-

parently been so completely legislated into his being that to receive a command from God was at once to perform it. That Jehovah might ever be mistaken or that he might ever be unjust in his dealings with men (18. 25, 29) was a thought he could not entertain. In all his relations with men, in all his judgments on Israel, Jehovah had been abundantly justified. This unwavering conviction on Ezekiel's part may account to some degree for the apparent hardness and coldness of his own nature. In temperament, it is true, he resembled Amos and Isaiah rather than Hosea and Jeremiah. He was stern and severe, strong and resolute. But the severity which manifests itself in his book was more than temperamental. It was, in part at least, the outcome of a theological conviction, a theodicy. The destruction of Jerusalem had been ordered by Jehovah. His word was not to be gainsaid. There was, then, no reason to lament the approaching doom. Once or twice, it is true, the prophet cries out against its apparent severity (9. 8; 11. 13). But, as a rule, he has no word of sympathy for the doomed city. He even exults over its fall (6. 11). The roll written on both sides with "lamentations and mourning and woe" was in his mouth "as honey for sweetness" (3. 3). Such an attitude, however, on his part toward his own people was not natural to

him, was not simply the outgrowth of his temperament. He had a more tender side to his nature. This is clear from his relation to the individual Israelites (18. 23, 31f.; 33. 11), and also from his later words of hope to the exiled people (chapters 34 to 37). What caused him to be so unrelenting in his earlier messages of doom was the divine command. Jehovah's word had made his forehead "as an adamant harder than flint" (3. 9).

The commission which Ezekiel received in his inaugural vision did not differ essentially from that of the earlier prophets (2. 1-7; 3. 4-11). His message, like theirs, was to be a message to the nation; it was also to be a message of doom; like those before him, he was to meet with opposition; and the people, as of old, would be unresponsive, more so even than those of a foreign tongue. The new element in his commission was his field of labor. He was to address himself to the exiles. All the prophets before his time had lived and labored in the land of Israel. He was the first to be called to exercise the prophetic office among "them of the captivity." This fact necessarily influenced, to no small extent, his ministry. His message of doom had, it is true, a certain significance for the exiles. It meant that they must give up their hope of a speedy return to their

native land. It meant also the end of their old religious nationalism. But it did not and could not have for them the same significance that it had for the residents of Judah. In the very nature of the case, the fall of Jerusalem could not involve them in any such danger as it did the people in the homeland. However patriotic, then, the exiles may have been, they must have felt themselves more or less detached from the fate of their sacred city. Its destruction must have presented itself to their minds as a more or less objective event, one that they could view at a distance and in which they were not themselves immediately implicated. Hence, we should expect a prophet among them to be more reflective than one living at this time in Jerusalem. We should also expect him to devote more attention to the problems of the individual. The conditions of life in a foreign land must, it would seem, make this inevitable. And so it turned out in Ezekiel's case. In 3. 16-21 we have what looks like an appendix to his call, in which he is commissioned to be a watchman with the care of individual souls. Whether this belonged to his original commission is a question that cannot easily be decided. Perhaps it may have been added later by the prophet himself. In any case, it formed a new and important element in his ministry.

Visions played a more important part in the life of Ezekiel than in that of any of the other prophets. In addition to his inaugural vision, we have two elaborate visions in chapters 8 to 11 and 40 to 48. In the former the prophet is carried to Jerusalem, where he sees the idolatries in the temple, the slaughter of the wicked, and the withdrawal of Jehovah and his chariot from the ruined city. In the latter he receives instructions for the rebuilding of the temple and the government of the restored city which is henceforth to bear the name, "Jehovah is there." It hardly seems possible that all the details of chapters 40 to 48 could have been apprehended in an actual vision. It is probable, then, that the prophet expanded and elaborated the original content of his visions. Some, indeed, go so far as to regard his visions as a mere literary form. But this is out of harmony with the specific language employed. "The hand of Jehovah was upon me," an expression that occurs again and again (3. 14, 22; 8. 1; 37. 1; 40. 1), points to some extraordinary psychological experience. Furthermore, the general conception of inspiration in the book of Ezekiel, its immediate and extraordinary character, leads one naturally to look for a revelation through the medium of vision and audition. These experiences, it would seem, came upon the prophet suddenly, while

the elders, for instance, were seated before him (8. 1; 14. 1, 2; 20. 1, 2). It may also be noted that two or three passages point apparently to his being endowed with telepathic powers (11. 13; 24. 2). From this it is clear that Ezekiel was an ecstatic and had to an unusual degree the gift of clairvoyance.

In recent years, however, it has been contended that Ezekiel was not only an ecstatic, as were the other prophets, but that he was afflicted with a deep-seated nervous disorder. In a word, he was a cataleptic, suffering at times from anesthesia, hemiplegia, and aphasia—ailments which robbed him of the free use of his limbs and organs of speech. The passages on which this view is based are chiefly these: 3. 15; 24. 25-27; 33. 21f.; 3. 25, 26; and 4. 4-8. In 3. 15 the prophet speaks of himself as sitting among the captives at Tel-abib "overwhelmed" for seven days. This is supposed to be a case of anesthesia—a cataleptic numbness. But nothing in the text requires or even favors such an interpretation. The same expression is used of Ezra (9. 3-4), and of the three friends of Job it is said that they sat silent before him seven days and seven nights (Job 2. 13). The cause in each of these cases was purely mental. Ezekiel was "overwhelmed" with the seriousness of the commission which he had just received. His expe-

rience in this instance corresponds to Jesus's forty days in the wilderness.

In 24. 25-27 and 33. 21, 22 we read of the opening of the prophet's mouth after a period during which he had been dumb. The beginning of this dumbness is usually found in 3. 25, 26, where Jehovah declares that he will cause the prophet's tongue to cleave to the roof of his mouth so that he will be dumb and will not be a reprover of the people. The ban here pronounced upon the prophet's public activity is nowhere said to have been lifted until we reach chapter 24. Hence, it is concluded that from almost the beginning of his ministry down to the fall of Jerusalem Ezekiel was in some sense "dumb." And our pathologists tell us that this dumbness is to be understood in a physical sense as a case of aphasia. Chapters 4 to 24, however, make it impossible that the prophet should have been completely silent during this long period. Consequently, we are told that he was subject simply to occasional attacks of aphasia. During much of the time, he was able to carry on his regular prophetic activity. What, then, is meant by the opening of his mouth in 24. 27 and 33. 22 is that after the fall of Jerusalem these attacks ceased altogether. But this whole theory of aphasia has no adequate basis in the text. The key to the passages just mentioned is to be found

in 29. 21 and 16. 63, where "the opening of the mouth" is manifestly to be understood in a figurative sense. For some time before the fall of Jerusalem Ezekiel had been silenced by the unbelief of his auditors, who flatly denied the truth of his message of doom. After the capture of the city, however, he met with no such opposition. His mouth was now opened. He could henceforth speak without fear of contradiction. The same view is also to be taken of 3. 25, 26. The dumbness there spoken of refers to a temporary silence of the prophet caused by the opposition of the people early in his ministry. How long this silence lasted we do not know. There is no connection between this passage and 24. 25-27 and 33. 21, 22.

In 4. 4-8 we are said to have a case of hemiplegia. The prophet is here commanded to lie on his left side three hundred and ninety or, if we follow the Septuagint, one hundred and ninety days, and then on his right side forty days, as a sign of the length of the captivity of Israel and Judah. This, it is thought, would have been impossible unless he were in some sort of cataleptic state. But it is by no means certain that this emblem prophecy was intended to be literally carried out. The probability is that it was not. But even if it was, it is difficult to understand how a cataleptic condition could be en-

joined upon anyone for a certain definite period of time. One commentator has attempted to account for it by the theory of auto-suggestion. But this would seem to be out of the question when one considers the length of time here specified. And another commentator holds that we have here a later interpretation of an attack of hemiplegia, similar to Hosea's interpretation of his marriage. But this view finds no adequate support in the text and is in itself inherently improbable. We conclude, therefore, that, however strange some of Ezekiel's symbols and actions may appear to us, they are not to be ascribed to any form of catalepsy. Even if he was afflicted with such a malady, his prophetic teaching would not on that account be discredited. For every man's work must be judged by its fruits, not by its roots. Indeed, it might be regarded as all the more striking evidence of divine inspiration that a man so afflicted should have been responsible for the immortal utterances found in his book. But nothing in the text, as we have seen, requires such a view of him, and no real light is in this way thrown upon his remarkable personality.

Another question raised with reference to Ezekiel is as to whether the symbolical actions in his books were actually performed or not. Besides the one just discussed (4. 4-8) there are

eleven others. All of these except 37. 15-20, which announces the reunion and restoration of Judah and Joseph, have to do directly or indirectly with the fall of Jerusalem. In 21. 18-23 Nebuchadrezzar is represented as approaching Jerusalem; in 4. 1-3 we have a mimic siege of the city; in 4. 10, 11, 16, 17, and 12. 17-20 are two symbols depicting the scarcity of food and the fear of the besieged people; 12. 1-7 symbolizes the flight of the king; 5. 1-4a and 24. 1-14 announce in different ways the complete destruction of the city; 21. 6, 7 and 24. 15-24 tell of the dismay and stupefaction that will come upon the exiles when they receive the tidings of their city's fall; and in 4. 9a, 12-15 the eating of food prepared with loathsome fuel is made an emblem of the ceremonial pollution which the new captives will undergo when they are forced to eat unclean food in exile.

In endeavoring to decide whether these different emblem prophecies were literally carried out or not, it should first be observed that one of them is explicitly declared to have been a parable (24. 3). It should also be noted that there is a symbolical action incorporated in one of the visions (2. 8 to 3. 3). Neither of these, of course, was actually performed. The same is also true of such symbols as are found in Jer. 13. 1-11 and 25. 15ff. It is clear, then, that sym-

bolical actions were at times employed by the prophets as a mere literary form. But, on the other hand, there are unmistakable indications that they were not infrequently actually carried out (compare 1 Sam. 11. 7; 15. 27f.; 1 Kings 11. 29ff.; 22. 11; Isa. 20; Jer. 28; 32. 6-15). When, however, this was done by Ezekiel and when not, it is difficult to determine. He gives us no clear objective means of deciding the question, and in such cases as these it would manifestly be unsafe to take our modern standard of taste as a test. For in matters of this kind, ancient Oriental taste may have differed widely from our own. Still, it is probable that the more simple and manifest of the symbols, such as 21. 6, 7 and 24. 15-18 were literally performed, and that the more difficult ones, such as 4. 4-8 and 5. 1-4a, were not. In any case, there is no reason for supposing that Ezekiel's method in this regard differed materially from that of the other prophets.

Another point of dispute concerning Ezekiel has to do with the general nature of his ministry. Was he primarily a preacher or a writer? Is his book the deposit of an active public ministry, or was it, rather, a product of the study? The latter is the view commonly held. "His sermons," says Kent, "come from the study rather than the public forum and reflect the leisure and

spirit of meditation which distinguished the exile from the strenuous years preceding." And Smend declares that the whole book is the "logical development of a series of thoughts on a carefully elaborated and schematic plan; nothing can be removed without disarranging the whole." In harmony with this latter statement, it is held that 3. 25f. points forward to 24. 25-27, and that during the intervening period of six years Ezekiel did not speak in public, but sent out his prophecies in the form of written tracts, or simply addressed himself to those who visited him in his home. Even such activity as this, however, on his part would have violated the injunction in 3. 26 that he was not to be a "reprover" of the people. The fact is, as we have already seen, that 3. 25f. refers simply to a brief abandonment of his public ministry and has no connection with 24. 25-27. It is a serious mistake to regard the book of Ezekiel as a logically articulated whole or as a literary unity. It is, rather, a collection of originally independent discourses. Some of these may never have been publicly delivered. But nothing could be further from the truth than to say, as does Skinner, that "If the prophet had simply worked out his conceptions in the solitude of his chambers, the result would not have differed much from what we actually find."

There are numerous indications that Ezekiel stood in an active relation with the people about him. At the outset of his ministry he was commissioned to be a prophet to the exiles, to speak the words of Jehovah to them (2. 3; 3. 4, 11, 15); and this is the position in which he is represented throughout the book (11. 15). The elders come to see him (8. 1; 14. 1; 20. 1), and the people gather to hear him (33. 30-33). Not infrequently he takes some popular saying as the starting point of his discourse (compare 11. 3; 11. 15; 33. 24). He also alludes now and then to the mood of the exiles. They complain that they are suffering because of their fathers' sins (18. 2); they charge that Jehovah is not just and impartial in his dealings with men (18. 25); and after the fall of the city they cry out in despair that their bones are dried up and their hope gone (37. 11). Their attitude, likewise, toward himself and his message the prophet takes note of. At one time they declare that his prediction of doom will never be fulfilled (12. 22), and at another time that it relates only to the distant future, so that they need not concern themselves about it (12. 27). His words, they say, are merely "parables" (20. 49), not to be taken seriously; and he is himself unto them not as a prophet with commanding authority, but "as a very lovely song of one that hath a

pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument" (33. 32).

From such incidental references as these it is evident that Ezekiel stood in living contact with the people about him. But a more decisive consideration is found in the fact that the most distinctive features of his message grew out of the needs of the exiles. In his justification of the doom of Jerusalem and Judah and in his doctrine of individual retribution, he was not dealing with abstract problems. He was seeking to meet the actual questions of the exiles, seeking to save them from doubt and despair. It is only as we bear this in mind, only as we keep in view the concrete conditions under which he lived and labored, that we can properly understand the teaching of his book. Everything, then, points toward his having had an active ministry in the colony at Tel-abib. The symbol of the eating of the roll in 2. 8 to 3. 3 does not imply a "literary conception of prophecy different from that of the preceding prophets," but simply emphasizes the fact of the prophet's inspiration. He was delegated to bear the actual words of Jehovah to "them of the captivity." And what we have in his book is, for the most part, the deposit of such a direct and active prophetic career.

The book of Ezekiel may be divided into

three parts. Chapters 1 to 24 deal chiefly with the doom of Jerusalem and Judah; chapters 25 to 32 contain a number of prophecies against foreign nations; and chapters 33 to 48 are concerned mainly with the restoration of Israel. The middle section stands in close relation to the other two. It may be regarded either as an appendix to the prophet's message of doom or as an introduction to his message of hope. The book therefore, as a whole, has two main themes—one doom, the other hope. We begin with the former.

Since the time of Amos the central theme of the prophets has been the doom of Israel or Judah. This doom, as we have seen, was not viewed as an isolated event. It was projected against the background of a world judgment. And so it is also in Ezekiel (7. 2-4; 30. 7; 38 and 39). It is from this point of view that his prophecies against foreign nations, as well as those of the other prophets, are best understood. But Ezekiel's message of doom was delivered under different circumstances from those that attended the preaching of the earlier prophets. His auditors were already exiles. They hoped, it is true, for a speedy return to their native land, and hence were not disposed to receive with any favor the prophet's prediction of the fall of Jerusalem. But they were

not themselves immediately involved in its fate. No physical peril threatened them. Furthermore, they were not themselves directly responsible for the impending doom. They shared, to be sure, in the guilt of the nation, and even in their exile were not free from grievous sins (Ezek. 2. 5ff.; 3. 7ff.; 14. 1ff.; 20. 1ff.). But the immediate burden of the approaching fall of the city did not rest upon them. No change of conduct on their part could avert it.

Ezekiel's motive, therefore, in his message of doom, must have differed to some extent from that of the earlier prophets. Aside from dispelling the vain hopes of the exiles, he must have also had the aim of preparing their minds for the inevitable catastrophe so that their religious faith would not be shaken by it. It is, apparently, for this reason that he dwells at such length upon the sins of the nation. He wishes to reconcile his hearers to the destruction of Jerusalem by showing that it was abundantly deserved, that it was indeed required by the divine justice.

The charges which he brings against Israel are practically the same as those found in the preceding prophets, though in some regards they are more severe. The people, and especially the princes, have been guilty of injustice and immorality (9. 9; 11. 6; 22. 6-12, 27; 34). They have

fallen into idolatry and all manner of heathen abominations (6. 1-14; 16. 1-43). Even the temple precinct itself was invaded by these idolatrous practices (8. 1-18). As nations also, the people of both kingdoms have proven themselves untrue to Jehovah by entering into alliances with foreign powers (chapter 23). Their whole history, indeed, has been one long apostasy. Not even at its beginning, as the previous prophets had taught, was there a bright spot. Both in Egypt and the wilderness, Israel was guilty of idolatry and disobedience to the divine will (20. 6-13; 23. 3). And not only has her whole history been characterized by heathenish tendencies, she herself is of heathen descent. Her father was an Amorite and her mother a Hittite (16. 3). This, of course, is to be understood in an ethical, not ethnical sense. Israel, in her moral and religious nature, did not differ from the early heathen inhabitants of Canaan. She was a thoroughly rebellious people (2. 3; 3. 9; 12. 2). She had broken her covenant with Jehovah (16. 59). She had persistently played the harlot (16; 23).

In view of these facts it must have been clear to the most obtuse of the exiles that Jehovah was justified in the punishment he was about to mete out to Jerusalem. And not only justified; his very holiness of nature required that a people who

had so defiled the land should be driven away from it (36. 17-19). There was, accordingly, nothing in the fall of the nation that needed to disturb the true religious faith of the people. Jehovah was still God, and was working out his plans in the world. But while this was all true, the exile offered many grounds of discouragement. Some naturally reasoned that, if the nation was as wicked as the prophet had described and was deserving only of punishment, it was hardly worth while serving Jehovah any longer. Hence, they are represented as saying: "We will be as the nations, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone" (20. 32). Others felt that they were being unjustly punished for the sins of their fathers (18. 2); and others, again, in despair, cried out: "Our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we pine away in them; how, then, can we live?" (33. 10). "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off" (37. 11).

This state of discouragement seems to have become the prevailing mood of the exiles after the fall of Jerusalem. From this time on, therefore, Ezekiel devoted himself almost exclusively to a ministry of hope. This element was not altogether lacking in his earlier discourses, if we may trust the present arrangement of the book (11. 14-21; 16. 53-63; 17. 22-24; 20. 32-44;

21. 32). But after B. C. 586 it became his regular theme. We have in chapters 34 to 48 three different representations of the future. In chapters 34 to 37, together with the passages just cited from the earlier part of the book, we have the common prophetic conception of the restoration of Israel. Chapters 38 and 39, however, which may be regarded as a supplement to the preceding chapters, introduce us to a new view of the Messianic era. After Israel has been for some time restored to her native land she is to be attacked by the peoples of the north under the leadership of Gog, of the land of Magog. These peoples are to be overthrown with a terrible slaughter upon the mountains of Israel, after which the final and universal reign of peace is to be ushered in. The idea of an attack upon Israel by the nations of the world was not new. It formed a part of the traditional eschatology (38. 17; 39. 8). But Ezekiel, so far as we know, was the first to apply it to the distant future (38. 8, 16), after the Messianic era had already been introduced. This representation exercised an important influence on the development of apocalyptic. It also served a practical purpose in helping to keep alive faith in the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. No matter how discouraged and harassed the later Jews were, it was always possible for them to turn to these

chapters in Ezekiel and find consolation in the thought that eventually all powers hostile to the people of God would certainly be overthrown.

In chapters 40 to 48 we have a picture of the future from the priestly point of view. It is not a purified and restored nation, with a Davidic king at its head, to which Ezekiel here looks forward, but an ecclesiastical community, with an elaborate temple ritual and a prince whose chief function it is to provide for the temple service (46. 1-18). Many regard these chapters as the crown of the whole book and see in them a description of the final state of the redeemed people. But the differences between them and chapters 34 to 37 are so great that this view is hardly tenable. It would, rather, seem that, when Ezekiel, in B. C. 572, wrote chapters 40 to 48, he had, temporarily at least, relinquished his earlier prophetic ideal, and turned his attention to a more practical program for the restored community. There are traces in his earlier discourses of a tendency toward a priestly formulation of the requirements of Jehovah (18. 5-9; 22. 7-12), but here this tendency is worked out into a system of statutes and ordinances, a theocratic constitution. The importance of this program for the subsequent history of Israel has already been pointed out. It became the foundation of Judaism.

We return, then, to chapters 34 to 37 and the related passages in the earlier part of the book for Ezekiel's prophetic conception of the future. In its main outlines this conception does not differ materially from that of the preceding prophets. Both Judah and Israel are to be restored (37. 15-28). Their restoration is to be like a resurrection from the dead (37. 1-14). The spirit of God is to enter into them and they are to live. The land is also to be restored to its former productivity (36. 1-15). The mountains are to shoot forth their branches and yield their fruit. "Showers of blessing" are to fall upon the people. And they are to be "secure in their land." "They shall no more be a prey to the nations, neither shall the beasts of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid" (34. 28). But before this state of peace and plenty is attained, Israel must undergo a process of purification. The rebels and those that transgress against Jehovah must be purged out of her (20. 35-38; compare 5. 3, 4a), and the evil shepherds of the past, "the fat and the strong," must be destroyed (34. 10, 16). When this is done Jehovah himself will shepherd his people. "I will seek," he says, "that which was lost, and will bring back again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken,

and will strengthen that which was sick" (34. 16). But he will not do this alone without a visible representative. "I will," he says, "set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David" (34. 23). Under this new ruler Judah and Israel will be reunited. "One king shall be king over them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more" (37. 22); but together they shall dwell in the land, and "David my servant shall be their prince forever." "My tabernacle also," Jehovah continues, "shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (37. 27).

In connection with this picture of the future, there are two or three points that call for special attention. First, these words of hope were intended for the exiles, and apparently for the exiles alone. In 11. 14-21 a sharp distinction is drawn between them and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The latter lay claim to the promises of the past, saying: "Get you far from Jehovah; unto us is this land given for a possession." But the prophet replies that it is those who have been removed far off among the nations who are to inherit the land and be, in fact, the people of God. Again, in 33. 23-29, those who remained in the waste places after the fall of Jerusalem are reported as saying, "Abraham was one,

and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance." To this the prophet replies by declaring that these survivors themselves will be visited by a destructive judgment which will make it clear that possession of the land does not rest upon natural grounds, but upon moral fitness. Everywhere in the book of Ezekiel it is the returned exiles, and apparently they alone, who are to share in the Messianic salvation. Of those who remained in Palestine Ezekiel, like Jeremiah (chapter 24), seems to have had a low opinion (12. 16; 14. 21-23). The future of Israel's religion, he was convinced, lay with "them of the captivity."

Another point to be observed in connection with Ezekiel's view of the future is the divine motive for the restoration of Israel. It is not love, as in Hosea, nor compassion, as in Jeremiah, but jealousy, regard for his own honor. Jehovah would not permit the heathen to profane his holy name by attributing the continuance of Israel's exile to his own weakness. He must, therefore, restore Israel in order to convince the nations that he is Jehovah, and to sanctify his name in their eyes. Not for Israel's sake, then, was the restoration to be accomplished, but for his own name's sake (36. 20-23). Back of this representation lay the great idea that the goal of human history is to be found

in the recognition of the sovereign will of God. Reverence for him as the moral ideal is the basis of all true religion. In the idea also that the restoration of the exiles did not depend upon their own deserts (36. 22, 32), there was an element of consolation. If they were to be dealt with according to their own merits, there would be little hope for them. Their one ground of confidence lay in the gracious will of God. We have here an anticipation of the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith.

But a more remarkable anticipation of Pauline teaching is to be found in Ezekiel's doctrine of regeneration and the impartation of the divine Spirit. Israel, before her restoration, and as a condition of it, is to undergo a complete change of character. "I will sprinkle," says Jehovah, "clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my ordinances, and do them" (36. 25-27). This is one of the high points in Ezekiel's teaching. Jeremiah had already taught the inwardness of true religion and the need of a radical

change of heart, but nowhere does he express so clearly as we have it here the idea of the new birth. Ezekiel at this point takes a step beyond Jeremiah.

The promise, however, of a transformed and restored nation did not meet all the religious difficulties of the exiles nor remove all their grounds of discouragement. They were still disturbed by the apparent injustice of God's dealings with them. Some thought they were being punished for the sins of their fathers, and others felt they were under the ban of their own past. There was, therefore, no hope for them. It was to meet this situation that Ezekiel formulated the doctrine of individualism, the most significant element in his teaching. This doctrine is distinctly expressed in five different passages (3. 16-21; 14. 12-20; 18. 1-32; 33. 1-9; 33. 10-20). In two of these (3. 16-21; 33. 1-9) the prophet is chiefly concerned with the question of the extent of his own responsibility. The answer given to this question is that he is responsible for the faithful performance of his duties as watchman, but not for their successful issue. But in these two passages, as well as in the other three, the general idea of individual responsibility and individual retribution is also clearly taught. There is no wholesale condem-

nation and no wholesale salvation of men. Everyone is judged by himself alone. There is also no transference either of merit or guilt. If a calamity come upon a land, "though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness" (14. 14). And so, on the other hand, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (18. 20). The destiny of every individual is determined by his own character. But Ezekiel does not stop there. He goes on to say that it is within the power of every individual to change his own character and so determine for himself whether his own lot is to be that of life or death (18. 21-32; 33. 10-20). The question of salvation, then, is purely individual and personal. There is no hereditary guilt and no vicarious suffering.

That this teaching was in the abstract admirably adapted to meet the practical needs of the exiles is generally admitted. It cut from under them all ground of complaint against the divine justice. But it did so, according to many, at the expense of the actual facts of life. The individual, it is said, is not so independent of others,

and of his own past, as is here declared. The prophet here gives us an "atomistic" view of the moral life. He denies the facts of heredity and social solidarity, and "cuts up the individual life into sections which have no moral relation to one another." But this criticism, which is not uncommon, rests upon a misunderstanding of Ezekiel's teaching. It assumes that he was writing from an empirical point of view, and meant to assert that in all the relations of life here and now the law of individual retribution is strictly observed. But this would so manifestly have contradicted the experiences of the exiles that we cannot credit Ezekiel with it. His standpoint is ideal. He is writing from a transcendent or eschatological point of view. What he is considering is the soul simply in its relation to God; and this he thinks of as finally settled at the great day of Jehovah which is not far distant. Between this standpoint and the empirical he may not himself have sharply distinguished. The two may for him have been to some extent confused with each other (compare 21. 3, 4 with 9. 4-6). This was almost inevitable at a time when the line had not as yet been sharply drawn between the temporal and the eternal, the material and the spiritual. But that the super-empirical or eschatological factor was prominent in the thought of Ezekiel cannot be questioned.

Life and death with him did not mean merely physical life and physical death. These terms carried with them a higher spiritual connotation. Something of what we mean by eternal life and death attached to them. Only as we realize this can we fully appreciate the religious energy of the prophet's message. And from this higher point of view his teaching concerning the individual is eminently true. The ultimate destiny of every person must rest with himself alone. This is a necessary requirement of absolute ethics.

To have thus disentangled the life of the individual from that of the nation was, of course, not the achievement of Ezekiel alone. It was the outcome of a long development. The idea that the righteous would not perish with the guilty was an ancient conviction (Gen. 18. 25), and must have formed the background of the earlier literary prophets (compare Amos 9. 9, 10). It was, indeed, implied in the current doctrine of the remnant. Then, too, we cannot suppose that these early prophets attributed to Jehovah a lower moral standard than that represented by the king Amaziah, who spared the children of his father's murderers when the latter were put to death (2 Kings 14. 5, 6). But while the idea of a distinction between the fate of the righteous and that of the wicked was not new with Eze-

kiel, it was he, so far as we know, who first formulated the doctrine of individualism. He made it a necessary correlate of the divine justice. And not only did he do this. He also put back of it the gracious will of God, and so transformed it into a gospel. "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (33. 11). This is the most precious saying in the whole book of Ezekiel. It comes nearer than any other to the heart of the New Testament. As we read it, we can almost hear the voice of the Master saying, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15. 10).

CHAPTER VII

DEUTERO-ISAIAH THE PROPHET OF UNIVERSALISM

Amos and Hosea, as we have seen, owe much of their present distinction to the work of modern critics. But the debt of Deutero-Isaiah to this source is, in a sense, still greater. The very knowledge of his existence is a modern discovery. For some reason or through some circumstance, his prophecies came to be attached to the book of Isaiah and to be regarded as a part of the work of the great prophet of the eighth century. This was the view of Jesus the son of Sirach (Ecclus. 48. 22-25), who lived about B. C. 200. It was also the opinion universally held until a little over a century ago.

The arguments which have led modern scholars to assign Isaiah 40 to 66 to another and later prophet are partly literary, partly theological, and partly historical. The language and style of the two parts of the book differ so widely from each other that they can hardly have emanated from the same person. The same is also to be said of the theological ideas. And the historical conditions presupposed in the latter part of the book require us to believe that the author

must have lived about one hundred and fifty years after the time of Isaiah. The people of Israel are no longer in their own land, but are scattered to the four corners of the earth (43. 5, 6). Jerusalem is destroyed and the cities of Judah laid waste (44. 26). The dominant world power is not Assyria but Babylon. And Babylon is soon to be destroyed (46. 1, 2; 47). A new world-conqueror, Cyrus by name, has appeared upon the scene (44. 28). He has already subdued many nations, and before long will perform the pleasure of Jehovah upon Babylon herself (48. 14). This general situation is not predicted as something that is to occur in the distant future. It is assumed to be already existent. Cyrus is already upon the scene. The people of Israel are already in exile. Indeed, it is to them as exiles that these prophecies are addressed. There can, then, be no doubt that the author of these chapters himself lived in the time of the exile.

For some reason the writer did not attach his name to the prophecies. It has been suggested that he may himself have issued them under the name of Isaiah, in order to express the conviction that the divine word he was commissioned to deliver was in substance the same as that spoken by the greatest of the prophets of the past. In that case his work was pseudepi-

graphic, like that of the later apocalyptists. But while this would account for the loss of the author's name and would also explain the fact that his prophecies form a part of the book of Isaiah, there is no direct evidence in support of it. Not the slightest indication is anywhere given in these chapters that the author intended that they should pass for the work of Isaiah. There is no title, no superscription. Isaiah is nowhere mentioned by name. There is absolutely nothing that would suggest to the reader that the author lived in the eighth century before Christ. We therefore conclude that the author did not himself connect his prophecies with the name of Isaiah. Nevertheless, there is a certain spiritual affinity between the two men. The author of Isaiah 40 to 66 had evidently been a careful student of Isaiah. We observe, for instance, that he uses again and again Isaiah's characteristic designation of Jehovah, "the Holy One of Israel," and not only uses the name but shares in and emphasizes the fundamental idea thus expressed. There is, then, a double significance in the name Deutero-Isaiah, applied to him. It means not only that his prophecies form the second part of the book of Isaiah, but also that they reflect the spirit and reveal the influence of the great prophet of the eighth century.

Thus far we have spoken of Isaiah 40 to 66 as though these chapters were all the work of one man. And such is the view of not a few scholars. But as chapters 1 to 39 received later additions, it is not improbable that this was also the case with the second part of the book. Anyhow, it will have to be admitted that chapters 56 to 66 apparently come from a later date than chapters 40 to 55. After chapter 55 nothing is said about the return of the Jews from Babylon. Everything points to Jerusalem as the center of the life of the people. But how far beyond the return from Babylon (B. C. 537) these later chapters carry us is a difficult question to answer. The wall of the city has apparently not been rebuilt (58. 12; 60. 10). Hence, we cannot go down further than B. C. 445. But whether the second temple has been erected (B. C. 520-516) is not clear. Some passages (56. 5, 7; 60. 7, 13; 66. 6, 20ff.) seem to imply its existence; others, however, seem to imply with equal clearness the contrary (63. 18; 64. 10, 11; 66. 1-2). The result is that there is a wide diversity of opinion among scholars as to the origin of these chapters. Some assign them to a prophet who is supposed to have lived between B. C. 458 and 445, and to whom they give the name Trito-Isaiah. Others think we have here a number of anonymous prophecies written be-

tween the return from Babylon and the time of Nehemiah (B. C. 537-445). Still others see in them the work of Deutero-Isaiah himself during the later years of his life. In view of these conflicting opinions, it is fortunate that the most important utterances of Deutero-Isaiah are, in any case, to be found in chapters 40 to 55. The later chapters of the book, if from him, add very little to his positive message. We shall, therefore, make the earlier chapters (40 to 55) the chief basis of our study.

It is remarkable how completely Deutero-Isaiah has hidden himself behind his message. Not only has he withheld from us his name. We do not even know with certainty where he lived. The common view is that his home was in Babylonia; and this may be correct, but the evidence adduced in its support is far from conclusive. The word "here" in 52. 5 refers apparently to Babylonia, but so also does "from thence" in 52. 11. The latter verse, therefore, leaves the impression that wherever the author's home was it certainly was not in Babylonia. Hence, some have found it in Phœnicia, others in Egypt, and still others in Palestine. In favor of Palestine, it is urged that the author's vocabulary is distinctively Palestinian. The natural and artificial objects referred to are most of them characteristic of the Holy Land rather than

Babylonia. But over against this, it is claimed by others that Deutero-Isaiah's style shows clear traces of Babylonian influence. And if it is insisted that the author speaks at times as though he were a resident of Palestine (41. 9; 40. 2, 9), it is replied that he simply transports himself thither in imagination. Thus the argument goes on. The fact is that data for a final solution of the problem do not exist. Chapters 40 to 55 are singularly lacking in local coloring. The burden of the Babylonian exiles is manifestly upon the prophet's heart (40. 27; 48. 20), and hence it is natural to seek him among them. But his thought is rooted in no single place. From his watchtower, wherever it may have been, in Babylonia or Palestine, in Egypt or Phœnicia, he surveys the four corners of the earth. In a real sense the whole world was his parish.

But whether he at the same time carried on an active local ministry is another point on which he has left us in doubt. The common opinion is that he did not. A recent writer, for instance, describes him as "neither a man of action nor a preacher, but an observer, a writer, a recluse." In favor of this view various considerations are urged, such as the anonymity of his prophecies, the fact that they are addressed to no definite audience, their lack of concrete detail, and the continuity of thought that binds

them together into a literary whole. But to all this the reply is made that a man of such passion as Deutero-Isaiah could not have lived the life of a recluse. His very intensity of feeling must have driven him into the forum. Furthermore, there are indications here and there (50. 6, 7; 49. 4) that he was probably himself forced to suffer for his public activity. In any case, there is nothing in the fact of the anonymity of his prophecies that necessarily conflicts with their having been first publicly delivered to groups of hearers. And as for their supposed literary continuity, it is by no means certain that this continuity exists in the form and to the extent that is frequently claimed. It is quite possible, indeed probable, that we have here a number of originally independent prophecies. These prophecies may at first have been issued as tracts, and have been the direct outcome of an active public ministry. But, however they originated, it will have to be admitted that they have a more distinctly literary cast than do the earlier prophetic books. And this fact, together with the author's concealment of his own personality, indicates that in him the transition from prophecy to apocalyptic had already begun.

The date of Deutero-Isaiah, as we have already seen, appears to be definitely fixed by the historical references in his prophecies. Cyrus

is on the scene. Babylon is about to fall. The Jewish exiles are soon to go free. Shortly, then, before the fall of Babylon, in B. C. 538, must, it would seem, have been the date of Deutero-Isaiah's ministry. But a distinction should, perhaps, be made between chapters 40 to 48 and chapters 49 to 55. The latter, while they look forward to the release of the exiles (52. 11f.; 55. 12f.), say nothing about Cyrus and the capture of Babylon. They may, therefore, have been written after the fall of the city, but before the issue of the decree permitting the Jewish captives to return to their homeland (Ezra 6. 1-5). In that case they were issued a few months later than the preceding prophecies, and B. C. 540-537 might be fixed upon as the date of chapters 40 to 55 as a whole. If Deutero-Isaiah also wrote chapters 56 to 66 he must have continued his ministry in Jerusalem after the return from the Babylonian captivity.

Clear, however, and apparently final as all this is, it has in recent years been called in question by a number of American scholars, notably C. C. Torrey, C. F. Kent, and W. H. Cobb. These scholars contend that in the two instances where Cyrus is mentioned by name (44. 28; 45. 1) we have later interpolations, and that all the passages that have been supposed to refer to him (41. 2-4, 25; 44. 28; 45. 1-6, 13; 46. 11;

48. 14, 15) really refer to Israel, the servant-nation. With one stroke they thus eliminate from the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah the one element that bound them to a definite historical situation. Babylon and its fall, it is true, are still mentioned, But Babylon remained a great city long after it surrendered to Cyrus, and for several centuries was "the natural representative in the eyes of the Jews of the great world-power in the East" (Cobb). It may, then, be in this sense, and not as an independent Semitic kingdom, that it is referred to in Isa. 47 and 46. 1, 2. These passages consequently require no definite date. And so it is also with the references to the return from the exile. "We must," says Cobb, "enlarge our conception of the exile. The fifty years which a few Jews spent in Babylonia after the fall of the Holy City were simply a sample of what was going on in many lands in the time of our prophet, whoever, whenever, and wherever he was." What is said in Deutero-Isaiah about the exiles may therefore refer to that "wider dispersion over the civilized world of the Israelites whose ingathering continued to be an object of aspiration long after the Jewish state had been re-established." From this it is clear that if we eliminate the references to Cyrus from Deutero-Isaiah, we have no certain means by which to

date his prophecies. There was no specific occasion, so far as we know, that gave rise to them. They are left suspended in the air, and may have been written at any time during the Persian period (B. C. 538-332). Indeed, they need not even be confined to this period.

The question thus raised has an important bearing on the interpretation of Deutero-Isaiah. Not only are many individual passages affected by it, but the whole theme of the book is involved. Driver, for instance, defines the theme as "Israel's restoration from exile in Babylon." And this, supplemented by the idea of the final coming of the kingdom of God, is the natural view, so long as we regard the prophecies as written shortly before the fall of Babylon and as having in mind a concrete historical situation. Their aim, then, was, as Driver, says, "to arouse the indifferent, to reassure the wavering, to expostulate with the doubting, to announce with triumphant confidence the certainty of the approaching restoration." But if they were written during the Persian period and contained originally no reference to Cyrus and his capture of Babylon, it is evident that we must form a different conception of their character and purpose. They were not, according to this view, the outcome of any crisis in the life of the peo-

ple. They served no immediate historical purpose. They were simply religious discourses or poems of a general character inculcating the truth of "the supremacy of Jehovah and the call of Israel to be his servant, to reveal his light and truth to all mankind" (Cobb). There are thus two quite distinct conceptions of the origin and character of these prophecies.

In deciding between these views it should first be observed that it is a serious objection to the more recent of the two that it requires a modification of the received text. No matter how plausible the reasons may be for eliminating the name of Cyrus from 44. 28 and 45. 1, they are not and cannot be made sufficiently objective to overcome the natural and well-grounded prejudice in favor of the traditional reading, wherever this reading is not manifestly obscure or inconsistent with its context. And that this is not the case in the present instance cannot be gainsaid. But admitting the possible correctness of the change in the text, we still have difficulty in applying the apparent Cyrus-passages to Israel. The person, individual or collective, addressed in 45. 4 is clearly distinguished from Israel. It is for Israel's sake that he is called. "He shall build my city," says Jehovah, "and he shall let my exiles go free" (45. 13). That the one so spoken of was

Israel itself, is certainly in the highest degree improbable. Furthermore, the "ravenous bird from the east" in 46. 11 applies more naturally to Cyrus than to Israel. The same is also true of the victorious military career described in 41. 2, 3 and 45. 1-3. As an offset to this, it is pointed out that some of the things supposed to have been said of Cyrus are found also in passages that speak of Israel (compare 45. 1 with 41. 13). But this is characteristic of Deutero-Isaiah, a characteristic, it may be added, that renders especially difficult the interpretation of his prophecies. He has certain fixed formulas and well-defined ideas that he applies to all his characters, no matter whether he is speaking of Jehovah, of Cyrus, of Israel, or of the Servant. The result is that it is often no easy matter to determine whom he has in mind. But this manifestly does not warrant the conclusion that they all are one and the same being.

Another consideration that has no little weight in this connection is the analogy of the other prophets. The five whom we have studied all found their inspiration in some concrete historical situation. There was the approach of some enemy—the Assyrians, Scythians, or Babylonians—and the consequent threatened destruction of Israel or Judah. In each case such an impending event gave wings to the soul of the

prophet. This makes it natural to look for something similar in the case of Deutero-Isaiah. And such a situation is furnished by the victorious career of Cyrus and the approaching fall of Babylon. For upward of fifty or sixty years the Israelites had been in captivity. But lapse of time had not lessened their interest in the homeland. Fast days were regularly observed (Zech. 8. 19; 7, 5), commemorating the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25. 1), its capture (Jer. 39. 2), its destruction (2 Kings 25. 8f.), and the assassination of Gedaliah (Jer. 41. 1f.). In these and other ways the people kept alive the memory of the sad fate that had befallen their sacred city, and also stimulated the hope of better things both for themselves and for the desolate land. When, therefore, Cyrus appeared upon the scene, it was not unnatural that they should look toward him with more or less of expectancy. And as victory after victory attended his steps, as Media, Persia, and Lydia one after the other fell under his sway, the hope must have risen higher and higher that here at last was their expected deliverer. Under such circumstances it would seem almost inevitable that some inspired soul must have mounted up with wings as eagles and announced the fall of proud Babylon and the redemption and restoration of the chosen people. Certainly, no other

occasion in Israel's history was so well adapted to call forth such a message. It may, then, in default of positive disproof, be confidently assumed that we have here the actual conditions under which Isaiah 40 to 55 was written.

It would, however, be a serious mistake to suppose that Deutero-Isaiah's message consisted simply in the announcement of Israel's deliverance from Babylon. This was only part of a larger program. "The prophet," as Davidson says, "conceives himself to be standing before a restoration that is final and universal." The end of days has come upon him. A new and golden age is soon to dawn. It is from this point of view that the marvelous procession of the redeemed through the wilderness is to be understood. "Ye shall go out," says the prophet, "with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (55. 12, 13; compare 40. 3, 4; 41. 17-20; 43. 19-21). From the same standpoint also we are to understand the description of the new Jerusalem. "Behold," says Jehovah, "I have graven thee upon the

palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.... O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, I will set thy stones in fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy pinnacles of rubies, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy border of precious stones" (49. 16; 54. 11, 12). These and similar utterances of the prophet are not merely rhetorical extravagances. They express a vital faith on his part in the coming of a new heaven and a new earth.

The idea of the approaching end of the present world-order was not unknown to the earlier prophets. They expected before long a wonderful and final manifestation of the power of Jehovah. First, there was to be a general judgment, and then there was to be a renewal and restoration of the peoples of the earth under the leadership of a purified Israel. This was the form the idea of eternity took with them. And we can fully understand their message only as we bear in mind this general background of their thought. But they did not draw so sharp a contrast between the new and the old as does Deutero-Isaiah. They did not grasp so clearly as he the unideal character of the present order, nor did they see so plainly as he the antithesis between the temporal and the eternal. Hence, they laid no such stress as he upon the eternity

of the new age. "Israel," he says, "shall be saved by Jehovah with an *everlasting* salvation. ... and *everlasting* joy shall be upon their heads" (45. 17; 51. 11). Hence, also, the change to which they looked forward was far less radical than that which he describes. "Lift up your eyes," he says, "to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; and they that dwell therein shall die like gnats; but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished" (51. 6). This, says Duhm, is "the greatest and loftiest thought conceived before Christianity." It is not equivalent to the Christian idea of heaven, for individual immortality is not yet assured (compare 65. 20-22), but it is a long step in that direction. And a century or two later the goal was almost attained when an inspired seer, as he contemplated the glorious future, cried out, "He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Isa. 25. 8).

Passing now to a more general study of the teaching of Deutero-Isaiah, we are, first of all, impressed with the almost complete absence of a message of doom. This is in marked con-

trast with the earlier prophets, and was due to the altered circumstances of Deutero-Isaiah's ministry. We have already observed the effect which the fall of Jerusalem had upon Ezekiel's preaching. Previously his message had been one chiefly of doom. Thereafter it became one almost exclusively of hope and consolation. The reason for the change is manifest; and it was still operative in the time of Deutero-Isaiah. What the people in their national humiliation and depression of spirit needed was encouragement, not rebuke. But this does not mean that the prophet took no account of their shortcomings. He reminds them again and again that their suffering and misfortune have been the result of their own sins (42. 24f.; 43. 27f.; 50. 1). They have dealt very treacherously from the womb (48. 8), and are still blind and deaf (42. 18). Yea, they are insincere, obstinate, and even inclined to idolatry (48. 1-5). But these shortcomings were not characteristic of the people as a whole. In the nation as such the prophet had confidence. They were to be redeemed and were to be "all righteous" (60. 21). "Hearken unto me," says Jehovah, "ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye dismayed at their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them

like wool; but my righteousness shall be forever and my salvation unto all generations" (51. 7, 8). Deutero-Isaiah was not an individualist, but it is evident from this and other passages that he distinguished clearly between the fate of the righteous and that of the wicked. Certain destruction awaited the latter. Babylon, therefore, noted for its oppression, its pride and its wickedness, must needs go down into ruin (chapter 47). And so it must be with all that oppose the will of Jehovah (compare 57. 20f.). But for Israel as such there is no word of doom. The unrighteousness in her midst may delay the day of her redemption (59. 1, 2), but eventually she will be saved with an everlasting salvation.

The element of hope was not lacking in the earlier prophets, but with them it was incidental or followed a ministry of doom. Here it is the pervading spirit of an entire ministry. Deutero-Isaiah was throughout his whole career a prophet of hope. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins" (40. 1, 2). With these words he began his prophetic ministry and in this spirit he continued it (compare 51. 3; 66. 13).

Whether 61. 1-3 was written by him or not, and whether it referred originally to him or the Servant, it nevertheless expresses truly his own aims: "The spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

The true function of religion, according to Deutero-Isaiah, was to help and to sustain men. This is beautifully expressed by a contrast drawn between Jehovah and the heathen gods (46. 1-4). The latter are a burden to those that worship them. Their idols are carried about as a load on the backs of weary beasts and they themselves trail helplessly after them. Jehovah, on the other hand, has been a sustaining power to his people through all their history. He has borne them from the womb, and will continue to carry them even to old age. It is characteristic of the true Deity to help those who seek his aid. Jehovah, therefore, says to Israel, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. . . . When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee:

when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle about thee" (41. 10; 43. 2). Not even their sins need discourage the people of Israel, for, says Jehovah, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, . . . and I will not remember thy sins" (44. 22; 43. 25). In these quotations we have an illustration of the prevailing tone of Deutero-Isaiah's prophecies. They breathe throughout the spirit of deep sympathy and tenderness. What is said of the Servant, that he would not break the bruised reed nor quench the dimly smoking wick (42. 3), is true also of our prophet. The Lord Jehovah had taught him, as he had taught the Servant, "to sustain with words him that is weary" (50. 4).

The message of hope which Deutero-Isaiah brought to his contemporaries was first an announcement of the restoration of the exiles from Babylon and from the four quarters of the earth. Their return will far exceed the marvels of the exodus from Egypt (43. 16-21). Everywhere in the wilderness rivers and fountains are to break forth, and a glorious vegetation is to spring up (41. 18, 19; 43. 19). Palestine itself is to be transformed into an Eden (51. 3), and Zion, in surprise at the number of her children, will ask, "Who hath begotten me these?"

(49. 21). To provide for them she will be forced to enlarge the place of her tent and stretch forth the curtains of her habitations (54. 2). But the restoration is not to consist simply in material or national glory. All evil is to be removed; there is to be no more violence or destruction in the land (60. 18); sorrow and sighing are to flee away (51. 11); and the presence of Jehovah is to be enjoyed in all its fullness. The coming salvation is to exceed what even the most hopeful might ask or think, "for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (55. 8, 9). A new heavens and a new earth are to be created, "and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (65. 17). "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but Jehovah will be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah will be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (60. 19, 20). It is Israel who is thus addressed, but the blessings of the new age are not to be confined to one nation. The ends of the earth are

to share in them (45. 22). Even now they are offered freely to all men. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (55. 1, 2). Such was our prophet's message to the people of his day. No wonder that he is called "the Evangelist of the Old Testament"! No wonder that his book is termed "the Gospel before the Gospel"!

The most significant features, however, of Deutero-Isaiah's teaching remain yet to be considered. And the best way to approach them is to take up the four main characters that appear in his prophecies: Jehovah, Cyrus, Israel, and the Suffering Servant. The central figure of the book is, of course, Jehovah. The representation of him here given does not differ materially from that found in the preceding prophets. But as Amos laid special stress on the righteousness of God, Hosea on his love, Isaiah on his sovereignty, Jeremiah on his intimate relation to the soul of man, and Ezekiel on his holiness,

so there are certain aspects of the divine nature or activity that Deutero-Isaiah particularly emphasizes. Then, too, his thought is more developed than that of his predecessors. This is quite as true of his theology as of his eschatology.

What seems to have impressed Deutero-Isaiah most in connection with Jehovah was his work as Creator. He is the one "that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth" (44. 24). Expressions similar to this occur again and again (42. 5; 45. 12, 18; 48. 13; 51. 13). And some of the finest passages in the book refer to this aspect of the divine activity: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? . . . Lift up your eyes on high, and see: who hath created these? he that bringeth out their host by number, that calleth them all by name; for fear of him who

is of great might and strong power, not one is lacking" (40. 12-14, 26).

Along with this idea of the creative power of Jehovah went naturally the thought of his eternity, his transcendence, and his sole Godhead. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever" (40. 8). Jehovah is "the everlasting God" (40. 28). He is the first and also the last (48. 12). He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity" (57. 15). "It is he that sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth princes to nothing; that maketh the judges of the earth as vanity" (40. 22, 23). Nothing earthly can compare with him: "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are accounted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All the nations are as nothing before him; they are accounted by him as less than nothing, and vanity" (40. 15-17). How absurd, then, is all idolatry! How foolish the attempt to construct a likeness to God! (40. 18-20; 41. 6, 7; 44. 9-20; 45. 20; 46. 1, 2, 5-7). The only way to account for

these attempts is to ascribe them to a strange infatuation of the human heart (44. 17-20), for the idols are nothing and can do nothing (41. 23, 24). There is no God but Jehovah: "I am Jehovah, and there is none else; besides me there is no God.... Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour.... I am God, and there is none else.... I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God" (45. 5; 43. 10, 11; 45. 22; 44. 6). Thus Jehovah is represented as asserting again and again his sole deity. In earlier times this had not been necessary. The people then stood apart to a large extent from the great heathen world. But the exile wrought a radical change. It exposed them to all the perils of a heathen environment. There was danger of their being overawed by the civilization about them. There was danger of defection to false faiths. It was, therefore, imperative that they realize the fact that Jehovah, and he alone, is God, and that all other gods are nonentities. This was no new truth. It had been implicit in Israel's religion from the beginning, but it now needed to be made explicit. It needed to become a conscious article of faith; and such it is in Deutero-Isaiah. Here we have absolute monotheism, and we have it so clearly

and emphatically expressed that there can be no doubt about it.

This, then, is the conception of Jehovah that is most prominent with our prophet. He is sole Deity, the eternal and transcendent Creator of heaven and earth. But there is another side to his nature: he is also a God of grace. How impressively and persuasively this thought is expressed, has already appeared in our discussion of the prophet's message of hope. In this connection only one additional point calls for attention. Salvation is by Deutero-Isaiah regularly carried back to the divine righteousness. These two terms, instead of being opposed to each other, are used almost synonymously. "My righteousness," says Jehovah, "is near, my salvation is gone forth" (51. 5). "My righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation unto all generations" (51. 8). Jehovah is "a righteous God and a Saviour" (45. 21). This use of the word "righteous" or "righteousness" is commonly explained by saying that Jehovah stood in a covenant relation to Israel, and so was morally bound to be true to that relation and to save his people. But there are some passages in which his righteousness is represented as initiating the covenant with Israel (42. 6, 21), and also as leading to the salvation of all mankind (51. 5). It would seem, then, that a profounder

meaning must have underlain these statements with reference to the divine righteousness. And may it not have been this? God is not an irresponsible despot. He is the Creator and Father of all (compare 63. 16). He is, therefore, like any human parent—under obligation to his children. He is morally bound to do all he can to save them. His righteousness, instead of acting as a bar to the salvation of men, leads inevitably to it. God would not be true to himself as a moral being if he did not do everything within his power to bring about the redemption of men. This truth was probably not conceived so clearly by Deutero-Isaiah as it is here expressed. But some such idea was involved in his conception of the divine righteousness. And this idea, it may be added, forms the true basis of the Christian doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement.

Jehovah is the efficient cause of all things. "I," he says, "form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil" (45. 7). Still, he was under the necessity of using human instruments. Of these, two are prominent in Deutero-Isaiah—Cyrus and the Servant. The use of a foreigner to further the purposes of Jehovah was not unknown to the earlier prophets. Isaiah speaks of the Assyrian king, probably Sennacherib, as the rod of Jehovah's anger and the staff of his indignation (10. 5). And

Jeremiah refers several times to Nebuchadrezzar as the servant of Jehovah (25. 9; 27. 6; 43. 10). But Cyrus is here represented as standing in a more intimate relation to Jehovah than any preceding heathen ruler. He is Jehovah's "shepherd" (44. 28), "his anointed" (45. 1), the one "whom Jehovah loveth" (48. 14). Not only is he to let the exiles go free and to rebuild Jerusalem (45. 13), he is himself to become a worshiper of Jehovah (41. 25), and to be the means of bringing about the universal recognition of the true religion (45. 5, 6). How our prophet could have come to entertain such high hopes of Cyrus has been the subject of much speculation. Stress has been laid on the fact that Cyrus was a Persian. This, it is thought, may have led the prophet to believe that he was a Zoroastrian and so in sympathy with monotheism. But there is nothing in the official documents that have come down to us to support this view. Cyrus, it appears, was a polytheist; and, if he ever accorded Jehovah any recognition, it was simply as one among many gods. In the light of this fact, the view of him here expressed must be ascribed, in part at least, to the prophet's idealism. Cyrus as the anointed of Jehovah far surpassed the historic reality.

Before taking up the prophet's conception of the Suffering Servant a word is necessary con-

cerning the people of Israel as depicted outside of the Servant-passages. They are addressed and spoken of as the servant of Jehovah (41. 8f.; 43. 10; 44. 1f.; 45. 4; 48. 10). But they appear chiefly in a passive or receptive attitude. They are the subject of redemption rather than themselves a redemptive agency. They have been "called" by Jehovah (41. 9); he is to pour his Spirit upon them (44. 3); and they are to be his witnesses (43. 10; 44. 8). But no definite vocation is ascribed to them. They are blind and unresponsive (42. 18-20). They have sinned and are being punished for their sins (42. 24f.). They are a people robbed and plundered (42. 22). So severe are their afflictions that they feel that the justice due them has passed away from their God (40. 27), and that he has forgotten them (49. 14). There is now, however, to be a change in their fortunes (43. 1; 44. 1). Their iniquity has been pardoned, they have received double for all their sins (40. 2; compare 47. 6), and are henceforth to be the recipients of the divine favor in abundant measure. Heathen peoples are to be given as a ransom for them (43. 3); and they are to enjoy the sure mercies of David (55. 3). Instead of being forced to do the bidding of foreign conquerors, other nations are to run to them (55. 5) and to bow down before them (45. 14; 49. 22f.).

This representation of the Servant Israel differs so strikingly from that of the Servant found in four or five passages (42. 1-7; 49. 1-9a; 50. 4-9; 52. 13 to 53. 12; and possibly 61. 1-3) that the latter are commonly separated from the rest of the book and called as above the Servant-passages. These prophecies are the most important and the most difficult in the book. The utmost diversity of opinion prevails with reference to their origin and interpretation. "I should like," says Cornill, "to see the man whose head would not spin around like a top from surveying these opinions, which run through all possible permutations, and contradict one another at all conceivable points." The controversy centers about two main questions: were these passages written by Deutero-Isaiah or not? and is the Servant here referred to to be interpreted collectively or as an individual? The arguments in favor of assigning the passages to another hand are not especially strong. Those based on rhythm and style have no independent force; and those based on content do not take adequate account of the points of contact between the Servant-passages and the rest of the book. Viewed in the large, these prophecies seem necessary to complete the teaching of Deutero-Isaiah. As Cyrus is the human instrument of Israel's external redemption, so it seems natural there should be a human

agent through whom her inward or moral renewal is affected. And this we have in the Suffering Servant. Then too these passages contain the richest religious thought of the whole book, and throw a new light over all the other prophecies. To eliminate them would be, as Budde says, "to gouge out the eyes of the book."

The other question is a more difficult one. The Suffering Servant is at first sight depicted as though he were an individual. There are, for instance, several passages that seem to distinguish him clearly from Israel. In them we read that he is to be "a covenant of the people" (42. 6; 49. 6); he has been cut off because of the transgression of "my people" (53. 8); and he is "to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel" (49. 6; compare 50. 10). But, on the other hand, there is one verse in which he is directly identified with Israel (49. 3). And this, it will have to be admitted, is the view favored by the context as a whole. For in the rest of the book the Servant is Israel. It seems, then, only natural to hold that he is such in the Servant-passages also, since there is no statement anywhere to the contrary.

These apparently contradictory phenomena naturally raise the question as to whether there is any way of accounting for both sets of facts.

An interesting and ingenious attempt in this direction has recently been made by Professor Sellin. He holds that the Servant-passages were written by Deutero-Isaiah about B. C. 560, and that they referred originally to Jehoiachin, who that year was released from prison after thirty-seven years of rigorous confinement, and elevated to a position above that of "the kings who were with him in Babylon" (2 Kings 25. 27-30). This release of Jehoiachin, who was of the Davidic line, awakened, it is thought, the hope that the Messianic expectations of the nation would be realized in him. Deutero-Isaiah consequently idealized his life, and interpreted his suffering and virtual death during the long years of his imprisonment as an atonement for the sins of the people. This was a new and higher conception of the Messiah, and represents a very important development in Old Testament thought. But the newly awakened Messianic hope was not destined to be fulfilled. Jehoiachin probably died a few years after his release. When, then, twenty years later, Cyrus appeared upon the scene and the deliverance of Israel seemed near, the prophet transferred to the people the Messianic ideal previously connected with Jehoiachin (compare 55. 3-5). But in so doing he did not prepare a new set of prophecies. He retained the old ones practically unchanged,

simply putting them in a context which made them refer to the nation rather than an individual. It was not, however, actual Israel to whom he applied them any more than it was the actual Jehoiachin who was originally described by them. It was Israel from the ideal point of view, Israel as the representative of Jehovah's redemptive purpose.

Whether this theory be correct or not, it at least has the value of emphasizing the Messianic character of the Suffering Servant. It has been customary in recent years to deny that the Servant was in any proper sense of the term a Messianic figure. Cyrus, according to Deutero-Isaiah, was the "anointed" one, the Messiah (45. 1). But this is a very superficial and mechanical view to take of the subject. The Messiah in his essential nature was the ideal personage through whom the kingdom of God was to be introduced into the world. And in this sense the Suffering Servant is as truly Messianic as any royal character referred to in the Old Testament. It is, then, just as proper to see in Isaiah 53 a reference to the life of Christ as it is to find it in any other Old Testament passage, for, no matter to whom the Suffering Servant may have originally referred, he was, in any case, an ideal figure. And every ideal sincerely believed in is a prophecy. That he is not called

the Messiah, and that he is spoken of as though he were already present, has no significance as against this deeper view.

Nowhere in the Old Testament have we such a lofty religious ideal as in the Suffering Servant. Not only did he have the high and almost unique mission of being a light to the Gentiles (49. 6), not only was he tender and sympathetic in nature (42. 3), not only was he persistent in the face of discouragement (42. 4; 49. 4; 50. 7f.), not only was he patient in tribulation (50. 6; 53. 7); his life was a sacrifice for the sins of others, and a sacrifice voluntarily borne. Men esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But it was for their transgressions that he was wounded, for their iniquities that he was bruised. The chastisement of their peace was upon him, and with his stripes they were healed. Jehovah laid on him the iniquity of them all (53. 4-6). This was the divinely chosen method of redeeming Israel and of redeeming the world. Through the suffering and final exaltation of the innocent Servant the divine justice and love were to be so exhibited that men would acknowledge their guilt and turn in penitence to God. In this conception we have the high-water mark of Old Testament spirituality. And there is nothing superior to it in the New Testament. The only difference is

that what remained a pure ideal in the Old Testament became an actuality in the New.

But remarkable as is Deutero-Isaiah's conception of vicarious suffering, there is another element in his teaching that may properly be regarded as a more important contribution to the development of prophecy. This is his universalism. Israel's religion is to become the religion of the world. Jeremiah, as we saw, stood at the threshold of this great thought, but did not make it a vital part of his message. Ezekiel in one instance (16. 53-63) speaks of the restoration and redemption of the heathen world symbolized as Sodom, but, as a rule, manifests the particularism of a Jewish priest. Isaiah had occasional visions of Jerusalem as the religious center of the world (2. 2-4), but this with him could in the nature of the case be only a hope for the more or less distant future. So long as the nation was struggling for its life, there was manifestly no place for missionary activity. This could arise only after the state had fallen and the people had come into more intimate contact with the heathen world. Our prophet was consequently the first to express clearly and emphatically the idea of Israel's mission to the world. And along with this went naturally the thought that the religion of Jehovah was in-

tended for all men. All peoples were to share in his salvation. Deutero-Isaiah, therefore, is fittingly termed the prophet of universalism.

This, however, does not mean that there are no traces of particularism in his prophecies. In spite of all his breadth he was still an intense nationalist. He looked upon Israel as the special object of Jehovah's care. And this led him at times to take what looks like an ungenerous and even hostile attitude toward the heathen. Jehovah, for instance, says to Israel: "They shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet" (49. 22, 23; compare 61. 5, 6). He also adds: "I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine" (49. 26). With this may be compared the powerful figure of Jehovah in 63. 1-6. "Who is this," asks some one, "that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" And the answer is, Jehovah, who has trodden down the peoples in his anger, and stained all his raiment with their lifeblood.

But such passages as these do not represent the real attitude of Deutero-Isaiah. They are,

rather, traditional eschatological material which has been adopted without being fully assimilated. His true position with regard to the heathen appears in his teaching concerning the Servant, Cyrus, and Jehovah. The Servant is to bring forth justice to the Gentiles, and the isles are to wait for his law. He is to be a light to the nations, and Jehovah's salvation to the end of the earth. His sufferings also are to avail for the heathen. It is they, as well as the guilty Israelites, who are represented as saying, "All we like sheep have gone stray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (53. 6). The redemption of the heathen is, therefore, the chief aim of the Servant, and the Servant-nation Israel. Israel's history is not an end in itself, but simply a means by which to bring about the salvation of the world. And so it is also with Cyrus. "I will gird thee," says Jehovah, "though thou hast not known me; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am Jehovah, and there is none else" (45. 5, 6). All human history has thus for its climax the universal knowledge of the true God. Every important idea in the book points toward this culmination. The sole deity of Jehovah, the nothingness of the idols, the sufferings and exaltation of the Servant, the

career of Cyrus, the approaching parousia—all these conceptions look forward to the time when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. It is, then, in line with the teaching of the book as a whole, when Jehovah says: "A law shall go forth from me, and I will establish my justice for a light of the peoples. My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the peoples; the isles shall wait for me, and on mine arm shall they trust. . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. By myself have I sworn, the word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (51. 4, 5; 45. 22, 23). These utterances represent the zenith of the prophetic conception of redemption. They imply that the true house of Jehovah will henceforth be "a house of prayer for all peoples" (56. 7); and they also point forward to the time when it shall be said that "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3. 11).

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Genesis PAGE
18. 25 238
44. 5 32
49. 8–12 6

Exodus
7. 1 30

Numbers
12. 6–8 ..... 33, 36
23 and 24 5
24. 4 34

Deuteronomy
13. 1–3 36
18. 9–18 39
18. 15, 18 11

1 Samuel
7 and 8 13
9. 6 ..... 29, 34
9. 9 ..... 13, 29
10. 5–13 2
15 ..... 13, 15
18. 10 2
19. 18–24 14

2 Samuel
7. 8–16 5
12 16
24 15

1 Kings
11. 29ff. 16, 221
18. 13 6
18. 16–46 16
18. 25–29 3
19. 1–18 16
19. 18 156
21 16
22. 5ff. 6, 8, 10

2 Kings PAGE
4. 1–7, 38–41 6
5. 20ff. 8
9. 11 ..... 2, 34
14. 5, 6 238
24. 1 173
25. 27–30 271

Nehemiah
6. 10–14 2

Psalms
74. 9 28

Isaiah
1. 11–17 148
1. 18 149
1. 26 159
2. 2–4 ..... 159, 274
2. 6 ..... 39, 147
2. 12 146
4. 2–6 159
5. 8–23 148
6 128
7. 1–13 135
7. 3 ..... 127, 156
7. 4, 9 151
7. 14–17 160
8. 16 158
8. 17 155
8. 18 ..... 127, 156
9. 2–7 160
10. 5–7 ..... 141, 266
11. 1–9 160
18. 4 153
22. 1–14 139
22. 4 ..... 140, 148
25. 8 255
28. 7–13 138

Isaiah PAGE

28. 12 152
28. 15 ..... 6, 69, 146
28, 16 ..... 152, 156
29. 13 147
30. 8f. 21
30. 15 152
31. 3 ..... 129, 137
32. 1–5 160
40 to 66 ..... 27, 144, 240
40. 1, 2 257
40. 8, 12–14, 15–17 263
41. 2–4 ..... 247, 251
41. 25 267
42. 1–7 269
42. 6 ..... 265, 270
42. 24f. 256, 268
43. 2 259
44. 22 259
44. 24 262
44. 28 ..... 241, 247, 250, 267
45. 1 ..... 250, 267, 272
45. 5 ..... 264, 267, 276
45. 13 ..... 250, 267
45. 17 255
45. 21 265
45. 22 ..... 261, 264
46. 1, 2 ..... 241, 248, 263
46. 1–4 258
46. 11 ..... 247, 251
47 ..... 241, 248, 257
49 to 55 247
49. 1–9a 269
49. 3, 6 ..... 270, 273
49. 22, 26 275
50. 4–9 269
51. 4, 5 ..... 265, 277
51. 6 255
51. 7, 8 ..... 257, 265
52. 5, 11 244
53 269
53. 6 276
54. 11, 12 254
55. 1, 2 261
55. 8, 9 260
55. 12, 13 253
56 to 66 ..... 243, 247
60. 19, 20 260
61. 1–3 ..... 258, 269
63. 1–6 275

Jeremiah

1. 5 ..... 170, 171
1. 10 185
4. 3, 4 ..... 178, 190
4. 19–21 195
4. 23–26 186
6. 7 190
6. 16 ..... 23, 200
6. 20 178
7 ..... 180, 189
7. 4, 11, 21, 22 ..... 178, 179
8. 7 189
8. 8 177
8. 18; 9. 1 195
9. 21, 22 ..... 187, 196
10. 23 190
11. 1–14 ..... 177, 179
12. 1 205
13. 1–11 ..... 100, 220
13. 16 187
13. 23 190
15. 10 197
15. 17 196
15. 18, 19 199
16. 19, 20 194
17. 1 188
17. 14, 17 200
19. 1ff. 180
20. 9 199
20. 14–18 197
22. 15, 16 177
23. 5, 6 193
24 ..... 182, 233
26. 20–23 ..... 9, 180
28. ..... 10, 182, 188, 221
28. 8 ..... 171, 185
31. 29, 30 194
31. 31–34 193
32. 6–15 ..... 192, 221
36 ..... 181, 184
42. 7 42

Ezekiel PAGE

1 to 3 208
2. 1–7 213
2. 8ff. 220, 224
3. 15 . . . . . 216, 223
3. 16–21 . . . . . 214, 235
3. 25, 26 . . . . . 216, 222
4. 1–3 220
4. 4–8 . . . . . 216, 218, 219
4. 9–17 220
4. 14 . . . . . 202, 211
5. 1–4a 220, 221
7. 2–4 225
11. 13 . . . . . 212, 216
11. 14–21 232
12. 1–7 220
14. 9 10
14. 12–20 235
16. 3 227
16. 53–63 . . . . . 228, 274
16. 63 218
18. 1–32 235
18. 2 . . . . . 223, 228
18. 25 . . . . . 212, 223
20. 32 228
21. 6, 7, 18–23 220
24. 1–14, 15–24 . . . 207, 220
24. 25–27 . . . . . 218, 222
29. 21 218
33. 1–20 235
33. 10 228
33. 11 . . . . . 213, 239
33. 21, 22 217
33. 23–29 232
33. 32 224
34 to 37 . . . . . 213, 229, 231
34. 10, 16, 23, 28 . . . 231, 232
36. 16ff. 211
36. 20–23 233
36. 25–27 234
37. 11 . . . . . 223, 228
37. 22, 27 232
38 and 39 . . . . . 225, 229
40 to 48 . . . . . 202, 215, 230

Hosea

1 to 3 104

Hosea PAGE

1. 2 101
1. 3, 8 99
1. 10 to 2. 1 121
1. 11 . . . . . 122, 124
2. 5, 7, 12 114
2. 15 . . . . . 12, 121
2. 19 121
2. 23 122
3. 1 . . . . . 95, 119
4. 1, 2 111
4. 3 108
4. 8, 9 . . . . . 96, 97
5. 4 . . . . . 112, 118, 120
5. 6 112
5. 13 . . . . . 115, 120
6. 1, 4 . . . . . 118, 119
6. 6 . . . . . 112, 118, 149
7. 5 94
7. 11 115
8. 3 117
8. 13 . . . . . 66, 108, 112, 115
9. 7, 8 . . . . . 2, 34, 97
9. 15 . . . . . 107, 120, 122
11. 1–4 120
11. 8, 10, 11 . . . . . 120, 121
12. 7, 8 110
12. 13 11
13. 11 117
13. 13 119
13. 14 . . . . . 107, 120
14. 4 122

Amos

1. 2 71
2. 4, 5 61
3. 2 . . . . . 61, 71, 77, 162
3. 7 30
3. 8 65
3. 9–12 66
3. 12 69
4. 4 . . . . . 71, 79
4. 6–11 . . . . . 65, 86
4. 13 61
5. 2 75
5. 4–6; 14. 15 . . . . . 70, 83, 87, 156

Amos PAGE
5. 8, 9 60
5. 18 ..... 6, 69, 74, 162
5. 21–24 ..... 80, 149
6. 1ff. 62, 74
6. 9, 10 72
6. 12 82
6. 14 62
7. 10–17 63
9. 2–4 ..... 70, 75
9. 5, 6 60
9. 7 78
9. 8–15 84

Micah
3. 5 ..... 7, 8
6. 6–8 ..... 26, 149

Matthew PAGE
1. 23 160
16. 14 201

Luke
15. 10 239
22. 20 201

Colossians
3. 11 277

Hebrews
11. 10 164

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